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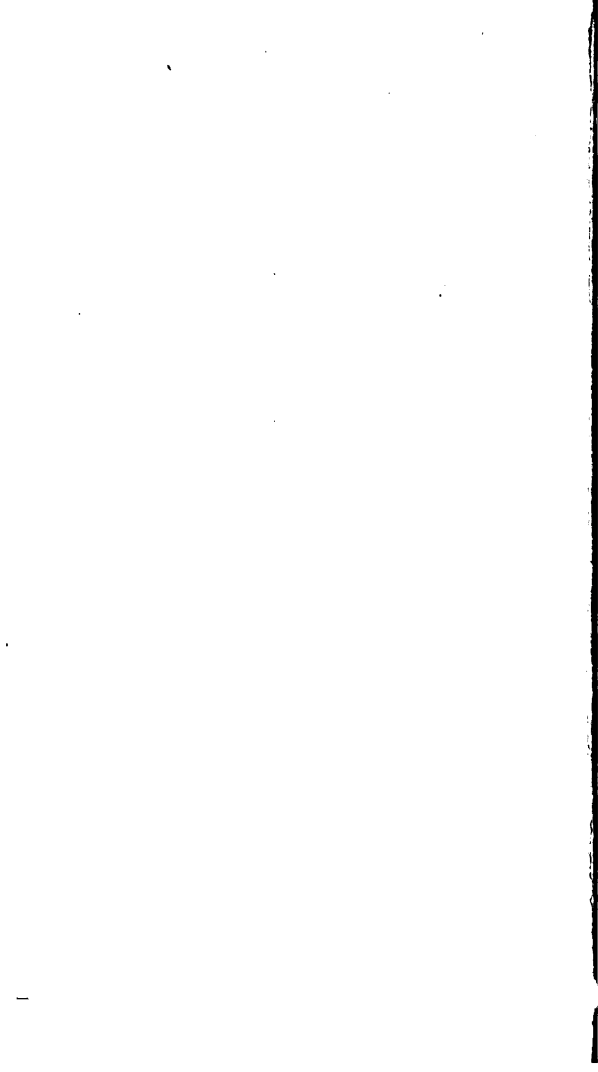
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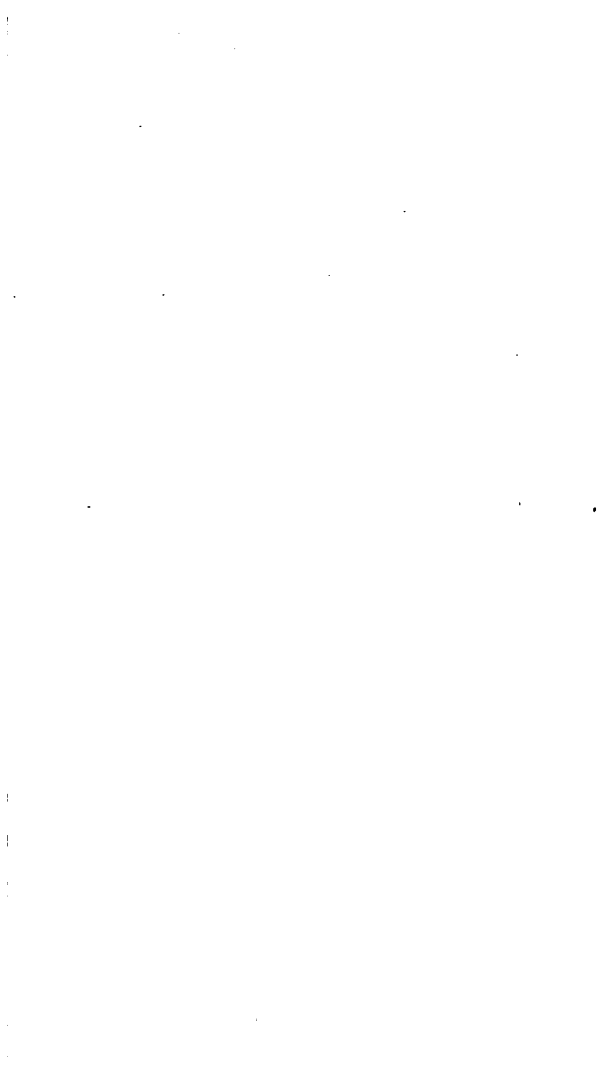
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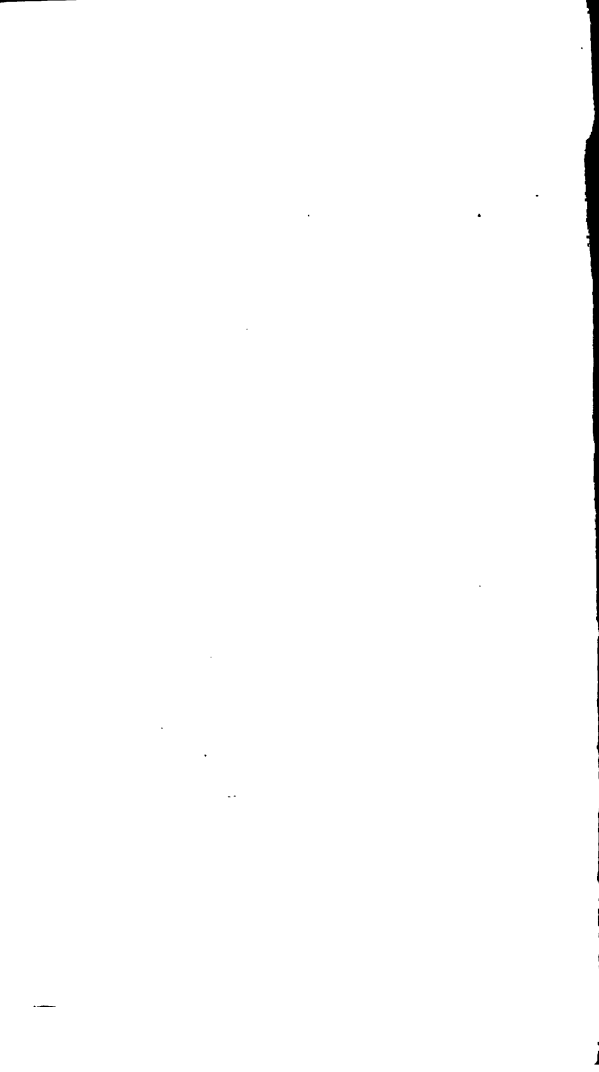
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THE SURRENDER OF CORNWALLIS.

THE

Y I F C

OF

George Washington

First

PRESIDENT

OF THE

United States

BY AARON BANCROFT, D.D.

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOL. 2.

Boston

Published by J. Ballington

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1826

ROY WEN

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GEORGE WASHINGTON,

COMMANDER IN CHIEF

OF THE

American Army,

THROUGH THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR;

AND THE

FIRST PRESIDENT

OF THE

UNITED STATES.

BY AARON BANCROFT, D. D.

PASTOR OF A CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH IN WORCESTER.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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LIFE

OF

GEORGE WASHINGTON.

CHAPTER VIII.

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1781. **ARNOLD**, having been appointed a Brigadier General in the British army, was with about sixteen hundred men detached to invade Virginia. With his armed ships he sailed up James' river, and at Richmond and other places destroyed publick and private property to a great amount. He at length indicated a design to establish a permanent post at Portsmouth.

The French fleet since its arrival on the American coast had been blocked up in the harbour of Newport, and the land forces had remained inactive in that town. But about this time the British blockading squadron suffered by a violent storm, and a temporary superiority was given to the French.

General **WASHINGTON** thought that a fair opportu-

nity presented to strike a decisive blow at the British detachment in Virginia, and to obtain the person of Arnold. In pursuance of this scheme, the General detached the Marquis La Fayette to Virginia with twelve hundred of the American infantry : at the same time he requested the co-operation of the French from Rhode Island. The commanding officers gladly embraced the opportunity to engage in active services, that might prove advantageous to their American allies.

On the death of Admiral Ternay, at Newport, the command of the fleet devolved on Destonches. In compliance with the request of General WASHINGTON, he sailed with his whole squadron for the MARCH 8. Chesapeake, having eleven hundred land troops on board. The British Admiral Arbuthnot having repaired the damages sustained by the storm, immediately followed the French, and on the 25th an action took place between the two hostile fleets. The battle ended without loss to either fleet, but the fruits of victory were on the side of the English. The joint expedition was frustrated, the French returned to Newport, and Arnold was rescued from the fate which he merited.

The winter of 1781 in a degree renewed the privations and sufferings of the American army. The men were badly clothed and scantily fed ; and they had served almost a year without pay. Without murmuring they long endured their accumulated distresses. But the fortitude of the firmest men may be worn down. Disheartened by their sufferings, despairing of relief, and dissatisfied, that their country did not make more effectual exertions for their support, the spirit of mutiny broke out with alarming appearances.

The Pennsylvania line stationed at Morristown, with the exception of three regiments, revolted. On a concerted signal, the non-commissioned officers and privates turned out with their arms, and announced the

design of marching to the seat of Congress, there to demand a redress of their intolerable grievances. The mutiny defied opposition. In the attempt to quell it, one officer was killed, and several dangerously wounded. General Wayne, in a threatening attitude, drew his pistol, the mutineers presented their bayonets to his breast and said, "General, we love and respect you, but if you fire, you are a dead man. We are not going to the enemy, on the contrary if they were now to come out, you should see us fight under your orders with as much alacrity as ever ; but we will no longer be amused, we are determined on obtaining what is our just due." Thirteen hundred of them, under officers of their own election, marched in order for Princeton with their arms and six field pieces. They committed no other act of violence, than to demand of the inhabitants provisions for their necessary support.

Congress sent a Committee of their own body to confer with them. They demanded the redress of their grievances as the basis of accommodation. Sir Henry Clinton sent out agents to invite them to his standard, promising them more advantageous terms than those demanded of Congress. They with indignation rejected his proposals, and delivered over his emissaries to General Wayne, who hanged them as spies. President Reed offered the mutineers a purse of a hundred guineas as a reward for the surrender of the British emissaries. This they refused, declaring that "what they had done was only a duty they owed their country, and they neither desired, nor would receive any reward but the approbation of that country, for which they had so often fought and bled."

The Council of Pennsylvania appointed Mr. Reed, their President, and General Potter, a Committee to compromise with the soldiery, to whom the gentlemen from Congress transferred their powers. The Committee felt themselves compelled to yield more to the demands of these soldiers in a state of mutiny, than

would have retained them quietly in their ranks, had the government of Pennsylvania seasonably attended to their pressing wants. Most of the artillerists, and many of the infantry were discharged, because their time of service was vaguely expressed in the orders under which they had enlisted. The residue received furloughs for forty days ; and the whole line was, for this period, absolutely dissolved.

The evil did not rest with the troops of Pennsylvania. Some of the Jersey brigade at Pompton caught their complaining spirit, and imitated their mutinous example. The mutineers were mostly foreigners, and they made the same claims upon the country, which had been granted to the Pennsylvania line.

The former instance of mutiny had taken place at a distance from head quarters, and General WASHINGTON, upon serious deliberation, had resolved, not to hazard his authority as Commander in Chief, in the attempt to bring the revolvers to order by the influence of his personal character ; but to leave the delicate transaction with the civil government of the state ; and he was satisfied with the result. But he perceived the importance of arresting the progress of a spirit, which threatened the dissolution of his army. Relying on the firmness and patriotism of the New-England battalions, which were composed almost exclusively of native Americans, he determined to reduce the Jersey revolvers to unconditional subjection. General Howe was detached on this service, which he promptly performed. Two or three of the ringleaders were executed on the spot, and complete subordination was restored in the brigade.

The mutiny was suppressed, but causes of uneasiness remained, and these were not confined to the army. The money received into the national treasury from taxes imposed by state authorities, bore no proportion to the publick expense. The magazines were exhausted, and the states were so deficient in fur-

nishing provisions for the army, that supplies of every description were of necessity obtained by impressment. Publick credit being gone, the certificates of property in this manner taken, were considered of little value, and general uneasiness and murmuring ensued. These evils threatened the destruction of the army, and the loss of the American cause, unless a vital remedy was speedily applied to the publick disease.

The Court of London became intimately acquainted with the interior situation of the United States, and in consequence entertained sanguine expectations of a complete conquest of the States south of the Hudson. The letters of Lord George Germaine to Sir Henry Clinton, which were written at this period, urged him in the strongest language, to embrace the favourable opportunity to disperse the remnant of General WASHINGTON's army, and to push his conquest of the revolted colonies.

The spring of 1781 opened a gloomy prospect to the Commander in Chief. Congress had made a requisition upon the several states for an army consisting of thirty-seven thousand men. In May, the states, from New-Jersey to New-Hampshire inclusive, had not in the field more than seven thousand infantry. The men were generally new recruits, and time had not been given to discipline them. The cavalry and artillery, at no period during the campaign, amounted to one thousand men. Supplies of provisions were greatly deficient, and the soldiers were almost naked; the clothing for the army, expected from Europe, not having arrived. The Quarter Master's department had neither funds nor credit, and the transportation of stores could be made only by impressments, aided by a military force. Measures of this violent nature excited great uneasiness among the inhabitants; and General WASHINGTON expected that actual resistance would be made to them. These difficulties had been foreseen by the Commander in Chief, and he had mad-

every possible exertion to obviate them. He had repeatedly made known the urgent wants of the army to Congress and to the states, and had sent officers of the greatest influence into the respective governments to enforce his statements.

The mind of General WASHINGTON sunk not under his embarrassments. He had fully reflected upon the dangers incident to his situation, and his resolution rose to meet them. While pondering upon his desperate prospects, he received the grateful intelligence, that the government of France had loaned the United States six millions of livres, a part of which sum was advanced in arms and clothing for the army; and a part paid to the draughts of General WASHINGTON. Information was also given, that this government had resolved to employ a respectable fleet in the American seas the next summer.

The plan of vigorous operations was resumed, and it was determined by General WASHINGTON and the French commanders, that New-York should be the first object of their attack. On this occasion the Commander in Chief addressed letters to the Executives of the New-England states, and of New-Jersey, earnestly calling upon them to fill up their battalions, and to furnish their quotas of provision.

The near prospect of terminating the war animated these States to unusual exertions. The number of men indeed fell short of the requisition of Congress; but effectual measures were adopted to supply the army with provisions. Under the system of state requisition, meat, spirit, and salt were drawn from New England. A convention of delegates from these states met at Providence and adopted a system of monthly supplies, through the campaign. As soon as this plan could be carried into operation, the supplies of these articles were regular and competent.

Requisitions of flour were made from New-York, New-Jersey, and Pennsylvania. New-York and New-

Jersey, having been much exhausted by the depredations of the enemy, and by the necessary impressments of the American army, the chief dependence for this essential article was placed on Pennsylvania. The Legislature of the state was not vigorous in its measures, and a scarcity of flour was apprehended.

At this period, Mr. Robert Morris of Philadelphia, a member of Congress from that state, a merchant of much intelligence and enterprise, was entrusted with the management of the finances of the United States. To him the Legislature of Pennsylvania transferred the taxes appropriated to furnish the requisitions of Congress upon that state; and he in consequence contracted to supply the national requisition. By his personal agency and credit, he established temporary funds, amply supplied the army with flour, and furnished the Quarter Master General with the means effectually to execute the duties of his department. Through the campaign the movements of the army were made with facility and expedition.

In June, the French troops marched from Newport to the Head Quarters of the American army. As they approached the North river, General WASHINGTON laid a plan to surprise the British works at King's bridge. On the night of the 2d of July, the plan was to be carried into execution. At this time it was expected Count Rochambeau would reach the scene of action, to assist in maintaining the ground, which the American troops might gain. To secure his co-operation, the Commander in Chief sent an Aid to the Count requesting him to direct his route to King's bridge, and to regulate his march in such a manner as to be at that place by the specified time.

To mask the design, and to give a reason for the movement of the American army, which might not excite the suspicion of the British Commander, General WASHINGTON, in orders on the 30th of June mentioned that a junction with the French troops might

soon be expected. He, in subsequent orders, gave information "that the French army would not come to that ground, and as the General was desirous of showing all the respect in his power to those generous allies, who were hastening with the zeal of friends, and the ardour of soldiers, to share the fatigues and dangers of the campaign, he proposed to receive them at some other more convenient place; and for this purpose would march the whole line of the American army at three in the morning."

General Lincoln was appointed to command the detachment, which was to assail the works at King's bridge, and on the night of the 1st of July, he embarked in boats at Teller's point, and with muffled oars passed down the North river, undiscovered, to Dobb's ferry. At this place his boats and his men were concealed. He reconnoitred the works to be attacked, and found that a British detachment which had been some time in New-Jersey, had returned, and was encamped in force on the north end of York Island, and that an armed ship was in such a manner, stationed in the river, as to render it impossible for the American boats, without discovery, to approach the landing place. The attempt upon the enemy was of course relinquished.

General WASHINGTON extended his orders to an enterprise, to be carried into effect, should the attempt on King's bridge fail. This was to bear off a corps of emigrants which, under the command of Colonel Delancy, was posted above the British. The execution of this plan was left principally with the French, and General Lincoln was directed to take a position that would prevent the retreat of Delancy, and protect the flanks of the French from the British reinforcements from the Island. But the French troops did not in season reach the scene of action, and this scheme also failed. At day light a sharp skirmish took place between General Lincoln and a party of British light

troops. These retreated to York Island as General WASHINGTON approached, who had moved the army to support his detachments, and to follow up any advantage they might gain. On the sixth of July, Count Rochambeau joined the American army at Dobb's ferry.

Early in August Count de Barrass, who had succeeded to the command of the French fleet at Rhode Island, informed General WASHINGTON, that the Count de Grasse was to have sailed from the West Indies the 3d of that month for the Chesapeake, with twenty-five ships of the line, and three thousand land troops.

It became necessary to determine absolutely on the plan of operation. The battalions in the army, under the immediate command of General WASHINGTON were not full; it was known that the garrison at New-York had received a very considerable reinforcement; and the French marine officers appeared not ardent in the plan to attack the harbour of this city.

For these considerations General WASHINGTON determined to relinquish the attempt on New-York, and to march to Virginia to lay siege to the post of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown. Having resolved on this plan, he in a private manner adopted measures for its execution.

The defence of West Point and of the other posts on the Hudson was committed to General Heath, and a large portion of the troops raised in the Northern States was for this service left under his command. General WASHINGTON resolved in person to conduct the Virginia expedition. The troops under Count Rochambeau, and strong detachments from the American army, amounting to more than two thousand men, and consisting of the light infantry, Lamb's artillery and several other corps were destined for this expedition. By the 25th of August the whole body, American and French, had crossed the North river.

An intercepted letter of General WASHINGTON's, in

which he communicated, as the result of a consultation with the French commanders, the design to attack New-York, had excited the apprehensions of the British General for the safety of that city. This apprehension was kept alive, and the real object of the Americans concealed, by preparations for an encampment in New-Jersey opposite to Staten Island, by the rout of the American army, and other appearances indicating an intention to besiege New-York; and the troops had passed the Delaware out of reach of annoyance, before Sir Henry suspected their destination.

General WASHINGTON pressed forward with the utmost expedition, and at Chester he received
SEPT. 3. the important intelligence, that Count de Grasse had arrived with his fleet in the Chesapeak, and that the Marquis St. Simon had, with a body of three thousand land forces, joined the Marquis La Fayette. Having directed the route of his army from the head of Elk, he, accompanied by Rochambeau, Chatelleux, Du Portail, and Knox, proceeded to Virginia. They reached Williamsburg the 14th of September, and immediately repaired on board the *Ville de Paris*, to settle with Count de Grasse the plan of operation.

SEPT. 15. The Count afterwards wrote General WASHINGTON, that, judging his confined situation to be unfavourable for a naval engagement, he should sail to meet the English at sea or to block them up in the harbour of New-York. General WASHINGTON apprehending that the successful issue of the expedition, which he had conceived morally certain, might by this measure be defeated, sent a despatch by the Marquis La Fayette to the Count, to dissuade him from it. The Count consented to conform himself to the wishes of the American General, and remained at anchor in the bay of the Chesapeak.

The whole body of American and French troops reached Williamsburg by the 25th of September. At

this place the allied forces were joined by a detachment of the militia of Virginia, under the command of Governour Nelson. Preparations were soon made to besiege Yorktown.

The rivers, York and James, form a long and narrow peninsula, and Lord Cornwallis had chosen a position on the south side of York river as a military post, and had strongly fortified it. Opposite to Yorktown on the north shore is Gloucester Point, which projects into the river, and at this place reduces its width to one mile. This point his Lordship also possessed, and fortified. Between these posts the river is deep, and ships of the line may here ride in safety. The communication between Yorktown and Gloucester Point was defended by batteries on shore, and by several armed ships in the river. The body of the British army was encamped about Yorktown, within a range of redoubts and field works, erected to command the peninsula, which at this place is not more than eight miles wide, and to impede the approach of an assaulting enemy. Colonel Tarleton with six or seven hundred men defended Gloucester.

On the 28th, the main body of the allied army moved down towards Yorktown, driving before them troops of horse, and the piquets of the enemy. The columns, as they reached the ground assigned them, encamped for the night and lay upon their arms. The next day was employed in reconnoitring the enemy's position, in which service Colonel Scammel, an officer of merit, was mortally wounded, and taken prisoner. A force consisting of about two thousand French and Americans, under the command of the French General de Choise, was stationed on the north side of the river, to watch and restrain the enemy in Gloucester.

The French and Americans were employed until the 6th of October, in conveying their artillery and stores from the landing place to camp. On the night of that day, they broke ground within six hundred

yards of the British lines ; and the first parallel was completed with little loss. On the 9th and 10th, guns were mounted on the works, and the batteries began to play, with visible effect, on the lines of the enemy. Many of their guns were soon silenced, and their works damaged. By the 11th, the enemy scarcely returned a shot. The shells and red hot balls of the besiegers reached the British shipping in the river, and set the Charon frigate of forty-four guns, and several large transports on fire, which were entirely consumed. A spirit of emulation animated the troops of both nations, and the siege was prosecuted with vigour and effect. On the night of the 11th, the second parallel was begun within three hundred yards of the British lines. The working parties were not discovered until daylight, when the trenches were in a situation to cover the men. Three days were spent in completing the batteries of this parallel, which time the British indefatigably employed upon their lines. They opened new embrasures, and their fire was more destructive than at any previous period of the siege. Two redoubts in particular, advanced in front of the British lines, and which flanked the second parallel of the Americans, gave great annoyance ; and it was deemed necessary to carry them by storm.

To prevent national jealousy, and to keep alive the spirit of emulation, the attack of one was assigned to the American troops, and that of the other to the French. The Marquis La Fayette commanded the American detachment consisting of light infantry, which was designed to act against the redoubt near the river, and the Baron de Viominel, with the grenadiers and chasseurs of his nation, was ordered to storm the redoubt nearer to the British right. Colonel Hamilton, who through this campaign commanded a battalion of light infantry, led the advanced corps of the Americans to the assault, while Colonel Laurens turned the redoubt and attacked in the rear, to pre-

vent the retreat of the garrison. Without giving time for the abattis to be removed, and without firing a gun, the Americans gallantly assaulted, and instantly carried the works. Their loss was one sergeant and eight privates killed; and six officers, and twenty-six rank and file wounded. The garrison was commanded by a Major, and consisted of about fifty men. Of these, eight privates were killed, a few individuals escaped, and the residue were made prisoners.*

The redoubt attacked by the French was garrisoned by one hundred and twenty men, it made more resistance and was overcome at the loss of near one hundred men. Of the garrison eighteen were killed, and three officers and about forty privates were made prisoners.

The Commander in Chief was highly pleased with the gallantry of the attacking troops on this occasion. In general orders he congratulated the army on the success of the enterprise, and thanked the troops for their cool and intrepid conduct. "The General reflects," conclude the orders, "with the highest degree of pleasure, on the confidence which the troops of the two nations must hereafter have in each other. Assured of mutual support, he is convinced there is no danger, which they will not cheerfully encounter, no

* This event took place soon after the wanton slaughter of the men in Fort Griswold in Connecticut by the British. "The irritation of this recent carnage had not so far subdued the humanity of the American character as to induce retaliation. Not a man was killed except in action. 'Incapable,' said Colonel Hamilton in his report, 'of imitating examples of barbarity, and forgetting recent provocation, the soldiery spared every man that ceased to resist.' Mr. Gordon, in his History of the American War, states, the orders given by La Fayette, with the approbation of WASHINGTON, to have directed, that every man in the redoubt, after its surrender, should be put to the sword. These sanguinary orders, so repugnant to the character of the Commander in Chief, and of La Fayette, were never given. There is no trace of them among the papers of General WASHINGTON; and Colonel Hamilton, who took a part in the enterprise, which assures his perfect knowledge of every material occurrence, has publicly contradicted the statement."

Judge Marshall.

difficulty which they will not bravely overcome." The redoubts were the same night included within the second parallel.

Lord Cornwallis well knew that the fire of the second parallel would soon render his works untenable, and determined to attempt to destroy it. The sortie appointed for this service consisted of three hundred and fifty men, and was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Abercrombie. With great impetuosity, he attacked two batteries that were in the greatest forwardness and carried them ; but the guards from
Oct. 15. the trenches advancing, he was compelled to retreat without having effected his purpose. A few pieces of cannon were hastily spiked ; but they were soon again rendered fit for use. The service was honourable for the officers and men engaged, but the siege was not protracted.

By the afternoon of the 16th the British works sunk under the fire of the batteries of the second parallel ; in the whole front attacked, they could not show a single gun, and their shells were nearly expended. In this extremity his Lordship adopted the desperate resolution to attempt an escape. Leaving the sick and wounded in his posts, he determined with his efficient force to cross over to Gloucester, disperse the troops under De Choise, mount his troops upon horses that might be found in the country, direct his course to the fords of the Great rivers, and make his way to New-York. For this purpose boats were collected, and other necessary measures taken. On the night of the 16th the first embarkation arrived in safety at Gloucester, but at the moment the boats were returning, a violent storm arose, which forced them down the river. At day-light the storm subsided, and the boats were sent to bring back the soldiers to Yorktown, which with little loss, was accomplished in the course of the forenoon.

On the morning of the 17th, the fire of the Ameri-

can batteries became intolerable, which soon, by its reiterated effects, rendered the British post untenable. Lord Cornwallis, perceiving further resistance to be unavailing, about ten o'clock beat a parley, and proposed a cessation of hostilities for twenty-four hours, that Commissioners might meet to settle the terms on which the posts of York and Gloucester should be surrendered. General WASHINGTON, in his answer, declared his "ardent desire to spare the effusion of blood, and his readiness to listen to such terms as were admissible;" but to prevent loss of time, he desired "that, previous to the meeting of the Commissioners, the proposals of his Lordship might be transmitted in writing, for which purpose a suspension of hostilities for two hours should be granted." The terms proposed by his Lordship, were such as led the General to suppose that articles of capitulation might easily be adjusted, and he continued the cessation of hostilities until the next day. To expedite the business, he summarily stated the terms he was willing to grant, and informed Earl Cornwallis, that if he admitted these as the basis of a treaty, Commissioners might meet to put them into form. Accordingly Viscount de Noailles, and Lieutenant Colonel Laurens on the part of the allies, and Colonel Dundas and Major Ross, on the part of the English, met the next day and adjusted articles of capitulation, which were to be submitted to the consideration of the British General. Resolving not to expose himself to any accident that might be the consequence of unnecessary delay, General WASHINGTON ordered the rough draught of the Commissioners to be fairly transcribed, and sent to Lord Cornwallis early next morning, with a letter, expressing his expectation that the garrison would march out by two o'clock in the afternoon. Hopeless of more favourable terms, his Lordship signed the capitulation, and surrendered the posts of York and Gloucester with their garrisons to General WASHINGTON: and the

shipping in the harbour, with the seamen to Count de Grasse.

The prisoners, exclusive of seamen, amounted to more than seven thousand, of which, between four and five thousand were fit for duty. The garrison lost during the siege, six officers and five hundred and forty-eight privates in killed and wounded. The privates with a competent number of officers were to remain in Virginia, Maryland, or Pennsylvania. The officers not required for this service, were permitted on parole to return to Europe, or to any of the maritime posts of the English on the American continent. Lord Cornwallis attempted to introduce into the treaty an article in favour of those Americans who had joined his standard ; but General WASHINGTON referred their case to the civil authority. Permission however was granted to his Lordship to send the Bonetta sloop of war, unsearched, to New-York to carry his despatches to Sir Henry Clinton, and in her those Americans went passengers, who had, in the highest degree incurred the resentment of their countrymen. The terms granted to Earl Cornwallis were, in general, the terms which had been granted to the Americans at the surrender of Charleston ; and General Lincoln, who on that occasion resigned his sword to Lord Cornwallis, was appointed to receive the submission of the royal army.

The allied army, to which Lord Cornwallis surrendered, amounted to sixteen thousand ; seven thousand French, five thousand five hundred continental troops, and three thousand five hundred militia. In the course of the siege, they lost in killed and wounded about three hundred. The siege was prosecuted with so much military judgment and ardour, that the treaty was opened the 11th, and the capitulation signed the 13th day after ground was broken before the British lines. The whole army received the unreserved approbation of the General. But the peculiar services

of particular corps entitled them to special notice. The artillerists and the engineers greatly distinguished themselves. Brigadiers Du Portail and Knox were promoted to be Major Generals. Major Generals Lincoln and the Marquis La Fayette were mentioned with high commendations, and Governour Nelson, who commanded the militia was thanked for his effectual exertions in the field, and in furnishing the army with such articles as his state afforded. To Count Rochambeau, to the French officers and troops, General WASHINGTON expressed his acknowledgments in flattering language.

The British General and Admiral at New-York had not been inattentive to the perilous situation of Lord Cornwallis. Admiral Rodney in the West Indies had early been apprized of the intention of Count de Grasse to visit the American coast; but not supposing that the whole of the French fleet on that station, would be employed on this service, Rodney detached Sir Samuel Hood to the continent with fourteen sail of line of battle ships. Sir Samuel reached the mouth of the Chesapeak before de Grasse, and finding no enemy there, sailed along the coast to Sandy Hook. Admiral Greaves then lay in the harbour of New-York with seven ships of the line. Immediately after the arrival of Hood, intelligence was received that Count de Barrass had sailed from Newport. Admiral Greaves with the whole British squadron without loss of time sailed in pursuit of him, and on the 24th of September he discovered the French fleet under de Grasse consisting of twenty four ships of the line, riding at anchor in the Chesapeak and extending across its entrance. Count de Grasse ordered his ships to slip their cables and form the line of battle. A partial engagement took place, in which some of the English ships were considerably damaged. The hostile fleets manœuvred for four or five days in sight of each other, and Count de Grasse then returned to his anchorage

ground. Here he found Count de Barrass who had taken a wide circuit to avoid the English, and had, while the hostile fleets were at sea, entered the Chesapeake with the squadron from Newport, consisting of five ships and fourteen transports, laden with heavy artillery and military stores for the siege. Admiral Greaves returned to New-York to repair.

In the course of a few days, the British squadron was augmented to twenty-five ships of the line, and Sir Henry Clinton determined to encounter every hazard in the attempt to relieve Earl Cornwallis. He embarked seven thousand of his best troops, and, convoyed by the fleet, sailed on the very day of the capitulation, for Virginia. At the entrance of the Chesapeake, on the 24th of October, he received information of the surrender of his Lordship, and he returned to New-York.

The capture of Lord Cornwallis and his army excited universal joy through the United States. In a circuitous route from Charleston to Yorktown, this army had marched eleven hundred miles and had spread terror and distress through the whole extent. From this dread the country was delivered. The surrender of a second royal army, the Americans deemed an event decisive of the independence of the United States, and which would speedily terminate the war.

The day after the capitulation General WASHINGTON ordered, "that those who were under arrest should be pardoned and set at liberty;" and announced, that "Divine service shall be performed to-morrow in the different brigades and divisions. The Commander in Chief recommends, that all the troops that are not upon duty do assist at it with a serious deportment, and that sensibility of heart, which the recollection of the surprising and particular interposition of providence in our favour claims." Congress as soon as they received General WASHINGTON's official letter giving information of the event, resolved to go in procession

to the Dutch Lutheran Church, and return thanks to Almighty God for the signal success of the American arms ; and they issued a proclamation, recommending to the citizens of the United States to observe the thirteenth of December as a day of Publick Thanksgiving and Prayer. The news of the capture of Earl Cornwallis was every where received with exultation and publick rejoicing.

Congress for this achievement, voted the thanks of the United States to General WASHINGTON, to Count Rochambeau, to Count de Grasse, to the officers of the allied army generally, and to the corps of artillery and engineers in particular. They also resolved that a marble column should be erected at Yorktown in Virginia, bearing emblems of the alliance between the United States and his Most Christian Majesty, and inscribed with a succinct narrative of the surrender of the British army under the command of Earl Cornwallis. Two stands of colours taken from the royal troops, were presented to General WASHINGTON, two field pieces to Count Rochambeau ; and application was made to the French Court that Count de Grasse might be permitted to accept a testimonial of the approbation of Congress, similar to that which Rochambeau had received.

To the Commander in Chief the most affectionate and respectful addresses were presented by the governments of the states, by the authorities of cities, and by the corporations of literary institutions.

The decided superiority of the allies in naval and land forces, General WASHINGTON wished to direct to the conquest of the British posts at Carolina and Georgia. He addressed a letter to Count de Grasse on this subject, requesting his co-operation in measures directed to these objects. But the Count declined, declaring that the service of his King demanded his immediate return to the West Indies.

Orders were of course issued for the disposition of

the allied armies for the approaching winter. Major General St. Clair was detached with two brigades to South Carolina to reinforce General Green. The French forces remained in Virginia. The Eastern troops embarked early in November for the Head of Elk, under the command of General Lincoln, who was ordered to march them from the place of their landing into New-Jersey and New-York, and to canton them for the winter in those states. Count de Grasse with his fleet sailed for the West Indies, and General WASHINGTON proceeded to Philadelphia.



CHAPTER IX.

Preparations for another Campaign—Sir Guy Carleton arrives at New-York and announces the vote of Parliament to acknowledge American Independence—Army anxious for their Pay—Anonymous Address exciting them to a Revolt—General Washington convenes and addresses the Officers—Their resolutions—Preliminary Articles of Peace received—Cessation of Hostilities proclaimed—General Washington addresses a Circular Letter to the Executives of the Several States—Army disbanded—New Levies of Pennsylvania revolt—The Commander in Chief enters New-York—Takes leave of his Officers—Resigns his Commission to the President of Congress—Retires to Mount Vernon.

1. THE brilliant issue of the last campaign did not relax the vigilance of General WASHINGTON. He deemed it true policy to call forth all the resources of the country, that the United States might be prepared for the conflicts of another year, or, might take a commanding attitude in a negotiation for peace. From Mount Vernon, on his way to the seat of government, he wrote General Green, "I shall attempt to stimulate Congress to the best improvement of our late success, by taking the most vigorous and effectual measures to be ready for an early and decisive campaign the next year. My greatest fear is that, viewing this stroke in a point of light which may too much magnify its importance, they may think our work too nearly closed, and fall into a state of languor and relaxation. To

prevent this error, I shall employ every means in my power, and, if unhappily we sink into this fatal mistake, no part of the blame shall be mine."

He reached Philadelphia the 27th of November, and on the next day had an audience of Congress. The President informed him that a committee was appointed to arrange the military establishment of the next year, and that he was requested to remain in Philadelphia to assist in this important business. At the consultations of this committee, the Secretary of War, the Minister of Finance, and the Secretary of Foreign Affairs assisted. The arrangements were made with despatch, and on the 10th of December, Congress passed the resolves for the requisitions of men and money for the year 1782 upon the several states; and the personal influence of the Commander in Chief was on this occasion used, to persuade the state governments seasonably to comply with the resolutions of Congress.

1782. The first intelligence from the British government, after the surrender of Earl Cornwallis, indicated a design to continue the American war; but early in May, Sir Guy Carlton arrived at New-York, to supersede Sir Henry Clinton as Commander in Chief of the British army; and he and Admiral Digby were appointed Commissioners to treat with the United States upon terms of peace. He communicated to General WASHINGTON a vote of the British Parliament against the prosecution of the American war; and a bill authorising the King to conclude a peace or truce with the *revolted provinces* of North America. Sir Guy professed his pacifick disposition, and proposed that hostilities should cease, as these would produce individual distress without national advantage. This bill, when Sir Guy left England had not passed into a law, and therefore was not a proper basis of negotiation; and the Commander in Chief continued his defensive preparations.

In August Sir Guy officially informed General WASHINGTON, that negotiations for a general peace had commenced at Paris; and that his Britannick Majesty had directed his Minister to propose the Independence of the United States as a preliminary.

The deficiency of the states in paying their respective requisitions of money into the national treasury subjected the Minister of Finance to extreme difficulty; but by anticipating the publick revenue, and by exerting, to the utmost, his personal influence, he was enabled barely to support the army. Neither Officers nor men received any pay. In September Congress contemplated the reduction of their military establishment. By this measure many of the officers would be discharged. In a confidential letter to the Secretary of War, the Commander in Chief expressed a full persuasion, that the gentlemen would gladly retire to private life, could they be reinstated in a situation as favourable as that which they quitted for the service of their country; but added he,

"I cannot help fearing the result of the measure, when I see such a number of men goaded by a thousand stings of reflection on the past, and of anticipation on the future, about to be turned into the world, soured by penury, and what they call the ingratitude of the publick; involved in debts without one farthing of money to carry them home, after having spent the flower of their days, and many of them, their patrimonies in establishing the freedom and independence of their country; and having suffered every thing which human nature is capable of enduring on this side of death. I repeat it, when I reflect on these irritable circumstances, unattended by one thing to sooth their feelings, or brighten the gloomy prospect, I cannot avoid apprehending that a train of evils will follow of a very serious and distressing nature.

"I wish not to heighten the shades of the picture so far as the real life would justify me in doing, or I

would give anecdotes of patriotism and distress which have scarcely ever been paralleled, never surpassed in the history of mankind. But you may rely upon it, the patience and long-suffering of this army are almost exhausted, and there never was so great a spirit of discontent as at this instant. While in the field, I think it may be kept from breaking out into acts of outrage; but when we retire into winter quarters, (unless the storm be previously dissipated) I cannot be at ease respecting the consequences. It is high time for a peace."

Although the military services of the field did not require the presence of the Commander in Chief, yet he was induced on account of the irritable state of the army to remain the whole season in camp.

The disquietude of the army arose more from an apprehension, that their country would ultimately fail in the compensation promised them, than from the deficiency of prompt payment.

In October 1780, Congress had passed a resolution, granting half pay to the officers for life; but they had no funds to pledge for the fulfilment of these engagements. Publick opinion seemed to be opposed to the measure, and the pointed opposition by a number of the members of the National Legislature, rendered it doubtful whether a future Congress would feel themselves bound by that resolution. This doubt was strengthened by the consideration that, since the passage of the resolution, the articles of confederation had been adopted, and by these the concurrence of nine states, in Congress assembled, is necessary to the appropriation of publick money. Could absolute confidence be placed in the honour and faith of the National Council, still they must depend on state sovereignties for the ways and means to execute their promises. The country had been greatly deficient to the army, in the time of war, when their services were absolutely necessary. Would this country, amidst the security

and tranquillity of peace, be more just? As the prospects of immediate peace brightened, the attention of the officers became the more engaged to secure a compensation for those services which were the means to establish the independence of their country. In December they presented a memorial to Congress, stating that many of them had expended their private fortunes, and most of them the prime of life in the service of their country, and petitioning that a gross sum might be granted them for the money actually due, and as a commutation for half pay. They chose a committee of officers to present their petition to Congress, and to attend its passage through that honourable body.

At this period, Congress was much divided in opinion upon the most important publick questions. State jealousies and interests arose in opposition to the engagements of the Nation; and although part of Congress, respectable for number and weight of character, acknowledged the merit of the military, and were in-

clined to do them justice, yet in March, the
1783. committee at the seat of government wrote the officers in camp, that no decisive measures were taken upon their petition. At this time, the intelligence arrived that the provisioned articles of peace between the United States and Great Britain were signed. The army viewed the moment as the crisis of their destiny. They recollected their past sacrifices, they felt their present wants, and anticipated future sufferings. Resenting the ingratitude of their country, and apprehending that it would ultimately be unjust, an irritable state of mind ensued, which threatened violence that would tarnish the glory of their own services, and commit the peace of their country.

On the 10th of March, an anonymous paper was circulated, requesting a meeting at eleven o'clock, on the next day, at the public building, of the general and field officers, of an officer from each company, and a legate from the medical staff to "consider their late

letter from their representatives in Philadelphia, and what measures (if any) should be adopted to obtain that redress of grievances which they seemed to have solicited in vain."

On the same day, the following publication, artfully addressed to the passions of the officers, and admirably calculated to stimulate them to adopt the desperate measure it recommended, was circulated through the camp.

" To the Officers of the Army.

" GENTLEMEN,

" A fellow soldier, whose interest and affections bind him strongly to you, whose past sufferings have been as great, and whose future fortune may be as desperate as yours—would beg leave to address you.

" Age has its claims, and rank is not without its pretensions to advise ; but though unsupported by both, he flatters himself, that the plain language of sincerity and experience will neither be unheard nor unregarded.

" Like many of you, he loved private life, and left it with regret. He left it, determined to retire from the field, with the necessity that called him to it, and not until then—not until the enemies of his country, the slaves of power, and the hirelings of injustice, were compelled to abandon their schemes, and acknowledge America, as terrible in arms, as she had been humble in remonstrance. With this object in view, he has long shared in your toils and mingled in your dangers. He has felt the cold hand of poverty without a murmur, and has seen the insolence of wealth without a sigh—but, too much under the direction of his wishes, and sometimes weak enough to mistake desire for opinion, he has until lately, very lately, believed in the justice of his country. He hoped that as the clouds of adversity scattered, and as the sunshine of peace and better fortune broke in upon us, the coldness and severity of government would relax, and that more

than justice, that gratitude would blaze forth upon those hands which had upheld her in the darkest stages of her passage, from impending servitude to acknowledged independence. But faith has its limits as well as temper, and there are points beyond which neither can be stretched, without sinking into cowardice, or plunging into credulity—This, my friends, I conceive to be your situation—hurried to the very verge of both, another step would ruin you for ever—to be tame and unprovoked when injuries press hard upon you, is more than weakness ; but to look up for kinder usage, without one manly effort of your own, would fix your character, and show the world how richly you deserve those chains you broke. To guard against this evil, let us take a review of the ground upon which we now stand, and from thence carry our thoughts forward for a moment, into the unexplored field of expedient.

“ After a pursuit of seven long years, the object for which we set out is at length brought within our reach—yes, my friends, that suffering courage of yours was active once—it has conducted the United States of America through a doubtful and a bloody war. It has placed her in the chair of independency, and peace returns again to bless—whom ? A country willing to redress your wrongs, cherish your worth, and reward your services ? A country courting your return to private life, with tears of gratitude, and smiles of admiration, longing to divide with you that independency which your gallantry has given, and those riches which your wounds have preserved ? Is this the case ? Or is it rather a country that tramples upon your rights, disdains your cries, and insults your distresses ? Have you not more than once suggested your wishes, and made known your wants to Congress ? Wants and wishes which gratitude and policy should have anticipated rather than evaded ; and have you not lately in the meek language of entreating memorials, begged

from their justice, what you could no longer expect from their favour? How have you been answered? Let the letter which you are called to consider to-morrow reply.

“ If this, then, be your treatment while the swords you wear are necessary for the defence of America, what have you to expect from peace, when your voice shall sink, and your strength dissipate by division? When those very swords, the instruments and companions of your glory shall be taken from your sides, and no remaining mark of military distinction left but your wants, infirmities, and scars? Can you then consent to be the only sufferers by this revolution, and retiring from the field, grow old in poverty, wretchedness, and contempt? Can you consent to wade through the vile mire of dependency, and owe the miserable remnant of that life to charity, which has hitherto been spent in honour? If you can—go—and carry with you the jest of Tories and the scorn of Whigs—the ridicule, and what is worse, the pity of the world. Go, starve, and be forgotten! But if your spirit should revolt at this; if you have sense enough to discover, and spirit enough to oppose tyranny, under whatever garb it may assume; whether it be the plain coat of republicanism, or the splendid robe of royalty; if you have not yet learned to discriminate between a people and a cause, between men and principles—awake; attend to your situation, and redress yourselves. If the present moment be lost, every future effort is in vain; and your threats then, will be as empty as your entreaties now.

“ I would advise you, therefore, to come to some final opinion upon what you can bear, and what you will suffer. If your determination be in any proportion to your wrongs, carry your appeal from the justice to the fears of government. Change the milk and water style of your last memorial; assume a bolder tone—decent, but lively, spirited, and determined, and suspect the man

who would advise to more moderation and longer forbearance. Let two or three men who can feel as well as write, be appointed to draw up your *last remonstrance* ; for I would no longer give it the suing, soft, unsuccessful epithet of memorial. Let it be represented in language that will neither dishonour you by its rudeness, nor betray you by its fears, what has been promised by Congress, and what has been performed—how long, and how patiently you have suffered—how little you have asked, and how much of that little has been denied. Tell them that though you were the first, and would wish to be the last to encounter danger, though despair itself can never drive you into dishonour, it may drive you from the field ; that the wound often irritated, and never healed, may at length become incurable ; and that the slightest mark of indignity from Congress now must operate like the grave, and part you for ever : that in any political event, the army has its alternative. If peace, that nothing shall separate you from your arms but death : if war, that courting the auspices, and inviting the direction of your illustrious leader, you will retire to some unsettled country, smile in your turn, and mock when their fear cometh on. But let it represent also, that should they comply with the request of your late memorial, it would make you more happy, and them more respectable. That while war should continue, you would follow their standard into the field, and when it came to an end you would withdraw into the shade of private life, and give the world another subject of wonder and applause ; an army victorious over its enemies—victorious over itself.”

The reluctance which Congress manifested to compensate the army for seven years' glorious service, excited a temper too favourable to the purposes of the writer of this intemperate address. Probably the influence of General WASHINGTON alone could have arrested the rising tempest ; and his firmness and pru-

dence were equal to the occasion. Silence in him would have encouraged the desperate to the prosecution of the most rash design; and strong and violent measures would have enkindled the smothered spark into a destructive flame. Noticing in general orders the anonymous publication, he expressed his confidence that the judgment and patriotism of the army would forbid their "attention to such an irregular invitation, but his own duty," he added, "as well as the reputation and the true interest of the army required his disapprobation of such disorderly proceedings. At the same time, he requested the general and field officers, with one officer from each company, and a proper representation from the staff of the army, to assemble at twelve on Saturday the 15th, at the new building, to hear the report of the committee deputed by the army to Congress. After mature deliberation, they will devise what further measures ought to be adopted as most rational and best calculated to obtain the just and important object in view." The senior officer in rank was directed to preside, and to report the result of their deliberations to the Commander in Chief.

The next day a second anonymous address was published. The writer affected to consider the orders of the General as countenancing the convention, recommended in the first publication.

On the 15th the officers met agreeably to orders, and General Gates took the chair. The Commander in Chief then addressed them.

"GENTLEMEN,

"By an anonymous summons an attempt has been made to convene you together. How inconsistent with the rules of propriety, how unmilitary, and how subversive of all order and discipline, let the good sense of the army decide.

"In the moment of this summons, another anonymous production was sent into circulation, addressed more to the feelings and passions than to the judg-

ther alternative, impracticable in their nature? But here, gentlemen, I will drop the curtain, because it would be as imprudent in me to assign my reasons for this opinion, as it would be insulting to your conception to suppose you stood in need of them. A moment's reflection will convince every dispassionate mind of the physical impossibility of carrying either proposal into execution. There might, gentlemen, be an impropriety in my taking notice, in this address to you, of an anonymous production;—but the manner in which that performance has been introduced to the army; the effect it was intended to have, together with some other circumstances, will amply justify my observation on the tendency of that writing.

“With respect to the advice given by the author, to suspect the man who shall recommend moderate measures and longer forbearance, I spurn it, as every man who regards that liberty and reveres that justice for which we contend, undoubtedly must; for, if men are to be precluded from offering their sentiments on a matter which may involve the most serious and alarming consequences that can invite the consideration of mankind, reason is of no use to us. The freedom of speech may be taken away, and dumb and silent we may be led, like sheep to the slaughter. I cannot in justice to my own belief, and what I have great reason to conceive is the intention of Congress, conclude this address, without giving it as my decided opinion, that that honourable body entertain exalted sentiments of the services of the army, and from a full conviction of its merits and sufferings, will do it complete justice. That their endeavours to discover and establish funds for this purpose have been unwearied, and will not cease until they have succeeded, I have not a doubt.

“But like all other large bodies, where there is a variety of different interests to reconcile, their determinations are slow. Why then should we distrust them? And in consequence of that distrust, adopt measures

which may cast a shade over that glory which has been so justly acquired, and tarnish the reputation of an army which is celebrated through all Europe for its fortitude and patriotism? And for what is this done? To bring the object we seek nearer? No; most certainly, in my opinion, it will cast it at a greater distance. For myself, (and I take no merit in giving the assurance, being induced to it from principles of gratitude, veracity, and justice, and a grateful sense of the confidence you have ever placed in me) a recollection of the cheerful assistance and prompt obedience I have experienced from you, under every vicissitude of fortune, and the sincere affection I feel for an army I have so long had the honour to command, will oblige me to declare in this publick and solemn manner, that in the attainment of complete justice for all your toils and dangers, and in the gratification of every wish, so far as may be done consistently with the great duty I owe my country, and those powers we are bound to respect; you may freely command my services to the utmost extent of my abilities.

“ While I give you these assurances, and pledge myself in the most unequivocal manner, to exert whatever abilities I am possessed of in your favour, let me entreat you, gentlemen, on your part, not to take any measures, which viewed in the calm light of reason, will lessen the dignity, and sully the glory you have hitherto maintained:—let me request you to rely on the plighted faith of your country, and place a full confidence in the purity of the intentions of Congress; that previous to your dissolution as an army, they will cause all your accounts to be fairly liquidated, as directed in the resolutions which were published to you two days ago; and that they will adopt the most effectual measures in their power to render ample justice to you for your faithful and meritorious services. And let me conjure you, in the name of our common country, as you value your own sacred honour: as you

respect the rights of humanity ; and as you regard the military and national character of America ; to express your utmost horror and detestation of the man who wishes, under any specious pretences, to overturn the liberties of our country ; and who wickedly attempts to open the floodgates of civil discord, and deluge our rising empire in blood.

“ By thus determining, and thus acting, you will pursue the plain and direct road to the attainment of your wishes ; you will defeat the insidious designs of our enemies, who are compelled to resort from open force to secret artifice. You will give one more distinguished proof of unexampled patriotism and patient virtue, rising superiour to the pressure of the most complicated sufferings ; and you will by the dignity of your conduct afford occasion for posterity to say, when speaking of the glorious example you have exhibited to mankind—had this day been wanting, the world had never seen the last stage of perfection to which human nature is capable of attaining.”

In the judgment, honour, and friendship of their General, the officers placed unbounded confidence ; and his recommendations carried irresistible weight. The most desperate had not the hardihood to oppose his advice. General Knox moved, and Brigadier General Putnam seconded a resolution, “ assuring him that the officers reciprocated his affectionate expressions with the greatest sincerity of which the human heart is capable,” which passed unanimously. On motion of General Putnam a committee was then chosen, consisting of General Knox, Colonel Brooks, and Captain Heywood, to prepare resolutions on the business before them. They reported the following resolutions, which on mature deliberation passed unanimously,

“ Resolved unanimously, that at the commencement of the present war, the officers of the American army engaged in the service of their country from the purest love and attachment to the rights and liberties of

human nature ; which motives still exist in the highest degree ; and that no circumstances of distress or danger shall induce a conduct that may tend to sully the reputation and glory which they have acquired, at the price of their blood and eight years faithful services.

“ Resolved unanimously, that the army continue to have an unshaken confidence in the justice of Congress and their country, and are fully convinced that the Representatives of America will not disband or disperse the army until their accounts are liquidated, the balances accurately ascertained, and adequate funds established for payment ; and in this arrangement, the officers expect that the half pay, or a commutation for it, should be efficaciously comprehended.

“ Resolved unanimously, that his Excellency the Commander in Chief be requested to write to his Excellency the President of Congress, earnestly entreating the most speedy decision of that honourable body upon the subject of our late address, which was forwarded by a Committee of the army, some of whom are waiting upon Congress for the result. In the alternative of peace or war, this event would be highly satisfactory, and would produce immediate tranquillity in the minds of the army, and prevent any further machinations of designing men, to sow discord between the civil and military powers of the United States.

“ On motion, resolved unanimously, that the officers of the American army view with abhorrence and reject with disdain, the infamous propositions contained in a late anonymous address to the officers of the army, and resent with indignation the secret attempts of some unknown persons to collect the officers together, in a manner totally subversive of all discipline and good order.

“ Resolved unanimously, that the thanks of the officers of the army be given to the Committee who presented to Congress the late address of the army, for

the wisdom and prudence with which they have conducted that business ; and that a copy of the proceedings of this day, be transmitted by the President to Major General M'Dougal ; and that he be requested to continue his solicitations at Congress, until the objects of his mission are accomplished."

Machinations which threatened the army with disgrace, and the country with ruin, being thus happily suppressed, General WASHINGTON without delay executed his promise to the officers ; and in a letter to Congress with feeling and force supported their claims upon their country.

Soon after these proceedings, nine states concurred in a resolution, commuting the half pay into a sum equal to five years' whole pay. Still Congress depended on the states to furnish the funds to enable them to fulfil this engagement.

In April the ratification of the preliminary articles of peace between France and Great Britain was received, and on the 19th of that month, a cessation of hostilities was proclaimed in the American camp.

In June General WASHINGTON addressed a circular letter on the important interests of the Union, to the Governors of the several states.—It began,

SIR,

"The great object for which I had the honour to hold an appointment in the service of my country, being accomplished, I am now preparing to resign it into the hands of Congress, and return to that domestick retirement, which it is well known, I left with the greatest reluctance ; a retirement for which I have never ceased to sigh through a long and painful absence, in which (remote from the noise and trouble of the world) I meditate to pass the remainder of life in a state of undisturbed repose ; but, before I carry this resolution into effect, I think it a duty incumbent on me to make this my last official communication, to congratulate you on the glorious events which Heaven

has been pleased to produce in our favour ; to offer my sentiments respecting some important subjects which appear to me to be intimately connected with the tranquillity of the United States ; to take my leave of your Excellency as a publick character, and to give my final blessing to that country in whose service I have spent the prime of my life ; for whose sake I have consumed so many anxious days and watchful nights ; and whose happiness being extremely dear to me, will always constitute no inconsiderable part of my own.

“ Impressed with the liveliest sensibility on this pleasing occasion, I will claim the indulgence of detailing the more copiously on the subject of our mutual felicitation. When we consider the magnitude of the prize we contended for, the doubtful nature of the contest, and the favourable manner in which it has terminated, we shall find the greatest possible reason for gratitude and rejoicing : this is a theme that will afford infinite delight to every benevolent and liberal mind, whether the event in contemplation be considered as a source of present enjoyment, or the parent of future happiness ; and we shall have equal occasion to felicitate ourselves on the lot which Providence has assigned us, whether we view it in a natural, political, or a moral point of view.

“ The citizens of America, placed in the most enviable condition, as the sole lords and proprietors of a vast tract of continent, comprehending all the various soils and climates of the world, and abounding with all the necessaries and conveniences of life, are now, by the late satisfactory pacification, acknowledged to be possessed of absolute freedom and independency ; they are from this period to be considered as the actors on a most conspicuous theatre, which seems to be peculiarly designed by Providence for the display of human greatness and felicity : here they are not only surrounded with every thing that can contribute to the

completion of private and domestick enjoyment, but Heaven has crowned all its other blessings, by giving a surer opportunity for political happiness than any other nation has ever been favoured with. Nothing can illustrate these observations more forcibly than the recollection of the happy conjuncture of times and circumstances, under which our republick assumed its rank among the nations.

“The foundation of our empire was not laid in a gloomy age of ignorance and superstition, but at an epocha when the rights of mankind were better understood and more clearly defined, than at any former period: researches of the human mind after social happiness have been carried to a great extent: the treasures of knowledge acquired by the labours of philosophers, sages, and legislators, through a long succession of years, are laid open for use, and their collected wisdom may be happily applied in the establishment of our forms of government: the free cultivation of letters, the unbounded extension of commerce, the progressive refinement of manners, the growing liberality of sentiment, and, above all, the pure and benign light of revelation, have had a meliorating influence on mankind, and increased the blessings of society. At this auspicious period the United States came into existence as a nation, and if their citizens should not be completely free and happy, the fault will be entirely their own.

“Such is our situation, and such are our prospects; but notwithstanding the cup of blessing is thus reached out to us, notwithstanding happiness is ours, if we have a disposition to seize the occasion, and make it our own; yet it appears to me, there is an option still left to the United States of America, whether they will be respectable and prosperous, or contemptible and miserable as a nation. This is the time of their political probation; this is the moment, when the eyes of the whole world are turned upon them; this is the

time to establish or ruin their national character for ever ; this is the favourable moment to give such a tone to the Federal Government, as will enable it to answer the ends of its institution ; or this may be the ill-fated moment for relaxing the powers of the Union, annihilating the cement of the confederation, and exposing us to become the sport of European politics, which may play one state against another, to prevent their growing importance, and to serve their own interested purposes. For, according to the system of policy the states shall adopt at this moment, they will stand or fall ; and, by their confirmation or lapse, it is yet to be decided, whether the revolution must ultimately be considered as a blessing or a curse ; a blessing or a curse, not to the present age alone, for with our fate will the destiny of unborn millions be involved.

“ With this conviction of the importance of the present crisis, silence in me would be a crime. I will therefore speak to your Excellency in the language of freedom and sincerity, without disguise. I am aware, however, those who differ from me in political sentiments, may perhaps remark, I am stepping out of the proper line of my duty ; and they may possibly ascribe to arrogance or ostentation, what I know is alone the result of the purest intention ; but the rectitude of my own heart, which disdains such unworthy motives, the part I have hitherto acted in life, the determination I have formed of not taking any share in publick business hereafter, the ardent desire I feel and shall continue to manifest, of quietly enjoying in private life, after all the toils of war, the benefits of a wise and liberal government, will, I flatter myself, sooner or later, convince my countrymen that I could have no sinister views in delivering with so little reserve, the opinions contained in this address.

“ There are four things which I humbly conceive are essential to the well being, I may even venture to

say, to the existence of the United States, as an independent power.

“1st. An indissoluble union of the states under one federal head.

“2dly. A sacred regard to publick justice.

“3dly. The adoption of a proper peace establishment. And,

“4thly. The prevalence of that pacifick and friendly disposition among the people of the United States, which will induce them to forget their local prejudices and policies, to make those mutual concessions which are requisite to the general prosperity, and, in some instances, to sacrifice their individual advantages to the interest of the community.

“These are the pillars on which the glorious fabric of our independency and national character must be supported. Liberty is the basis, and whoever would dare to sap the foundation, or overturn the structure, under whatever specious pretext he may attempt it, will merit the bitterest execration and the severest punishment which can be inflicted by his injured country.”

Having dilated on these subjects, the letter was thus concluded :

“I have thus freely disclosed what I wished to make known before I surrendered up my publick trust to those who committed it to me : the task is now accomplished. I now bid adieu to your Excellency, as the Chief Magistrate of your state ; at the same time I bid a last farewell to the cares of office, and all the employments of publick life.

“It remains, then, to be my final and only request, that your Excellency will communicate these sentiments to your Legislature, at their next meeting ; and that they may be considered as the Legacy of one who has ardently wished, on all occasions, to be useful to his country, and who even in the shade of retire-

ment, will not fail to implore the divine benediction upon it.

“ I now make it my earnest prayer, that God would have you, and the state over which you preside, in his holy protection ; that he would incline the hearts of the citizens to cultivate a spirit of subordination and obedience to government ; to entertain a brotherly affection and love for one another, for their fellow citizens of the United States at large ; and particularly for their brethren who have served in the field ; and finally, that he would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacifick temper of mind, which were the characteristicks of the divine Author of our blessed religion ; without a humble imitation of whose example, in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation.”

From this time the disbanding the army engrossed the attention of Congress and of the Commander in Chief. No funds were established to discharge the five years commutation. Large arrearages of pay were due to officers and privates, and it was not in the power of government to advance them money even to defray the expenses of the journey to their homes. To disband the army in a body under these circumstances, was deemed a measure of too great hazard. Congress therefore directed the General not to give discharges to the troops which were enlisted for the war, until the definite articles of peace should be signed ; but to grant furloughs to all non-commissioned officers and soldiers of this description, who desired them ; and they were not ordered to rejoin their regiments.

Alarmed at this measure, the Generals, and officers commanding regiments and corps on the Hudson, presented an affectionate and respectful address to the Commander in Chief, in which they expressed a dutiful attachment to the government, but mentioned that after the late resolution of Congress, they “ confident-

ly expected that their accounts would be liquidated, the balances ascertained, and adequate funds for the payment of those balances provided, before they should be dispersed or disbanded." On the succeeding day, in answer to their address, he observed, "that as no man could possibly be better acquainted than himself, with the past merits and services of the army, so no one could possibly be more strongly impressed with their present ineligible situation; feel a keener sensibility at their distresses; or more ardently desire to alleviate or remove them." He subjoined.

"Although the officers of the army very well know my official situation, that I am only a servant of the publick, and that it is not with me to dispense with orders which it is my duty to carry into execution, yet as furloughs in all services are considered as a matter of indulgence, and not of compulsion; as Congress, I am persuaded, entertained the best disposition towards the army; and, as I apprehend, in a very short time the two principal articles of complaint will be removed; until the further pleasure of Congress can be known, I shall not hesitate to comply with the wishes of the army, under these reservations only, that officers sufficient to conduct the men who choose to receive furloughs, will attend them, either on furlough, or by detachment."

This answer proved satisfactory; good humour prevailed through the camp, furloughs were generally taken; and in the course of the summer, the greater part of the soldiers returned quietly home.

In October, Congress issued a proclamation, declaring all those soldiers, who had engaged for the war, discharged on the 3d of December.

While the veteran troops, who had borne the heat and burden of the war, left the service unpaid, and peaceably returned to the business of private life; about eighty new levies, stationed at Lancaster in Pennsylvania, revolted from their officers, and in a body

marched to Philadelphia. Being there joined by two hundred of their companions in arms who were quartered in the barracks, they surrounded, with fixed bayonets, the State House, in which Congress and the Executive Council of Pennsylvania were sitting, and sent in a written message threatening the Council with the last outrage, if their demands were not, in twenty minutes, granted. The members of Congress were not immediately menaced, but they were, for several hours, insolently blocked up in their hall.

As soon as General WASHINGTON received intelligence of the mutiny, he detached General Howe with fifteen hundred men to suppress it; but before he reached Philadelphia, the disturbance was without bloodshed quiesced. In a letter to Congress, General WASHINGTON thus expressed his indignation at this outrage of the military.

“ While I suffer the most poignant distress in observing that a handful of men, contemptible in numbers, and equally so in point of service, (if the veteran troops from the southward have not been seduced by their example) and who are not worthy to be called soldiers, should disgrace themselves and their country, as the Pennsylvania mutineers have done, by insulting the sovereign authority of the United States, and that of their own, I feel an inexpressible satisfaction, that even this behaviour cannot stain the name of the American soldiery. It cannot be imputable to, or reflect dishonour on the army at large, but on the contrary it will by the striking contrast it exhibits, hold up to publick view the other troops in the most advantageous point of light. Upon taking all the circumstances into consideration, I cannot sufficiently express my surprise and indignation at the arrogance, the folly, and the wickedness of the mutineers; nor can I sufficiently admire the fidelity, the bravery, and patriotism which must for ever signalize the unsullied character of the other corps of our army. For when we consider that

these Pennsylvania levies, who have now mutinied, are recruits, and soldiers of a day, who have not borne the heat and burden of the war, and who can have, in reality, very few hardships to complain of; and when we at the same time recollect that those soldiers, who have lately been furloughed from this army, are the veterans who have patiently endured hunger, nakedness, and cold; who have suffered and bled without a murmur, and who with perfect good order, have retired to their homes, without a settlement of their accounts, or a farthing of money in their pockets; we shall be as much astonished at the virtues of the latter, as we are struck with horror and detestation at the proceedings of the former; and every candid mind, without indulging ill grounded prejudices, will undoubtedly make the proper discrimination."

On the 25th of November, the British troops evacuated New-York. General WASHINGTON, accompanied by Governour Clinton, by a number of other civil and military officers, and by many respectable citizens, make his publick entry on horseback into the city.

His military course being honourably and successfully terminated, the painful task remained to bid adieu to the companions of his toils and dangers. The closing interview took place on the 4th of December. At noon the principal officers of the army assembled at Francis's tavern, and their General soon entered the room. His emotions were too great for concealment. Filling a glass of wine he turned to them and said, "With a heart full of love and gratitude, I now take leave of you; I most devoutly wish that your latter days may be as prosperous and happy, as your former ones have been glorious and honourable." He drank the wine, and proceeded. "I cannot come to each of you to take my leave, but shall be obliged to you, if each of you will come and take me by the hand." General Knox being the nearest, turned to him. Incapable of utterance, General WASHINGTON grasped

his hand and embraced him. In the same affecting manner, he took leave of each succeeding officer. From every eye dropped the tear of sensibility, and not a single word interrupted the tenderness of the scene. He immediately left the room, and passed through a corps of light infantry, on his way to White Hall, where a barge waited to convey him to Powles' Hook. The whole company followed with feelings which words cannot express. Having entered the barge, he turned, and waving his hat, bade them a silent adieu.

Congress was then in session at Annapolis. To this honourable body, the General immediately repaired to resign his military command.*

* On his way to Annapolis, he stopped at Philadelphia to settle his accounts; of which transaction Dr. Gordon makes the following statement.

"While in the city, he delivered in his accounts to the Comptroller, down to December 13th, *all in his own hand-writing*, and every entry made in the most particular manner, stating the occasion of each charge, so as to give the least trouble in examining and comparing them with the vouchers, with which they were attended.

The heads are as follows, copied from the folio manuscript paper book in the file of the treasury office, No. 3700, being a black box of tin, containing, under lock and key, both that and the vouchers.

Total of Expenditures from 1775 to 1783, exclusive of Provisions from Commissaries and Contractors, and of liquors, &c. from them and others, ...		£3387 14 4
* Secret intelligence and service, ...		1982 10 0
Spent in reconnoitring and travelling, ...		1874 8 8
Miscellaneous charges, ...		2952 10 1
Expended besides, dollars according to the scale of depreciation, ...		6114 14 0
		£16,311 17 1

* "Two hundred guineas advanced to General M'Dougal are not included in the £1982 10, not being yet settled, but included in some of the other charges, and so reckoned in the general sum."

He arrived on the 10th, and on the next day informed Congress of his desire to resign into their hands the commission with which they had invested him as Commander in Chief of the American armies; and he asked in what form he should present his resignation. Congress resolved that it should be at a publick audience on the succeeding Tuesday. When the moment of this interesting transaction arrived, the gallery was crowded with spectators; and many of the civil officers of the state and of the principal officers of the

Note. 104,364 of the dollars were received after March, 1780, and although credited forty for one, many did not fetch at the rate of a hundred for one, while 27,775 of them are returned without deducting any thing from the above account (and, therefore, actually made a present of to the publick.)

(General WASHINGTON's account) from June,

1775, to the end of June, 1783, ... £16,311 17 1

Expenditure from July 1, 1783, to December

13, ... 1717 5 4

(Added afterwards) from thence to December

28, ... 213 8 4

Mrs. Washington's travelling expenses in com-

ing to the General and returning, ... 1064 1 0

£19,306 11 9

Lawful money of Virginia, the same as the
Massachusetts, or £14,479 18 9 $\frac{1}{4}$, sterling.

"The General entered in his book—" I find, upon the final adjustment of these accounts, that I am a considerable loser—my disbursements falling a good deal short of my receipts, and the money I had upon hand of my own: for besides the sums I carried with me to Cambridge, in 1775 I received monies afterwards on private account in 1777, and since which (except small sums that I had occasion to apply to private uses) were all expended in the publick service; through hurry I suppose, and the perplexity of business (for I know not how else to account for the deficiency) I have omitted to charge the same, whilst every *debit* against me is here credited. July 1, 1783."

army, the French Consul General, and a large body of respectable citizens were admitted to the floor of the Hall. The members of Congress, representing the sovereignty of the nation, were seated and covered. At twelve o'clock, General WASHINGTON was introduced and conducted to a chair. After a short interval the Secretary commanded silence. The President then informed the general, "that the United States in Congress assembled, were prepared to receive his communications." With dignity of manner suited to the occasion, he arose and addressed them :

"MR. PRESIDENT,

"The great events, on which my resignation depended, having at length taken place, I have now the honour of offering my sincere congratulations to Congress, and of presenting myself before them to surrender into their hands the trust committed to me, and to claim the indulgence of retiring from the service of my country.

"Happy in the confirmation of our independence and sovereignty, and pleased with the opportunity afforded the United States of becoming a respectable nation, I resign, with satisfaction, the appointment I accepted with diffidence ; a diffidence in my abilities to accomplish so arduous a task, which, however, was superseded by a confidence in the rectitude of our cause, the support of the supreme power of the Union, and the patronage of Heaven.

"The successful termination of the war has verified the most sanguine expectations ; and my gratitude for the interposition of Providence, and the assistance I have received from my countrymen, increases with every review of the momentous contest.

"While I repeat my obligations to the army in general, I should do injustice to my own feelings not to acknowledge, in this place, the peculiar services and distinguished merits of the gentlemen who have been attached to my person during the war. It was impos-

sible the choice of confidential officers to compose my family should have been more fortunate. Permit me, sir, to recommend in particular, those who have continued in the service to the present moment, as worthy of the favourable notice and patronage of Congress.

"I consider it as an indispensable duty to close this last solemn act of my official life, by commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, and those who have the superintendence of them to his holy keeping.

"Having now finished the work assigned me, I retire from the great theatre of action, and bidding an affectionate farewell to this august body, under whose orders I have so long acted, I here offer my commission, and take my leave of all the employments of publick life."

Having advanced to the chair and delivered the President his Commission, he received from him the following reply :

"SIR,

"The United States in Congress assembled, receive, with emotions too affecting for utterance, the solemn resignation of the authorities under which you have led their troops with success, through a perilous and a doubtful war.

"Called upon by your country to defend its invaded rights, you accepted the sacred charge, before it had formed alliances, and whilst it was without funds or a government to support you.

"You have conducted the great military contest with wisdom and fortitude, invariably regarding the rights of the civil power, through all disasters and changes. You have by the love and confidence of your fellow citizens, enabled them to display their martial genius, and transmit their fame to posterity. You have persevered, till these United States, aided by a magnanimous king and nation, have been enabled under a just Providence, to close the war in freedom,

safety, and independence ; on which happy event, we sincerely join you in congratulations.

“ Having defended the standard of liberty in this new world ; having taught a lesson useful to those who inflict, and to those who feel oppression, you retire from the great theatre of action, with the blessings of your fellow citizens ; but the glory of your virtues will not terminate with your military command ; it will continue to animate remotest ages.

“ We feel, with you, our obligations to the army in general, and will particularly charge ourselves with the interests of those confidential officers, who have attended your person to this affecting moment.

“ We join you in commending the interests of our dearest country to the protection of Almighty God, beseeching him to dispose the hearts and minds of its citizens, to improve the opportunity afforded them of becoming a happy and respectable nation. And for you, we address to him our earnest prayers, that a life so beloved, may be fostered with all his care ; that your days may be as happy as they have been illustrious ; and that he will finally give you that reward which this world cannot give.”

The General immediately retired from the hall of Congress. The minds of the spectators were deeply impressed by the scene. The recollection of the circumstances of the country at the time the commission was accepted, the events that had since taken place, and the glorious issue of the conflict conspired to give the scene the most lively interest.

His country being exalted to the dignity of a sovereign and independent nation, General WASHINGTON with great satisfaction resigned the arduous duties and high responsibility of his military command. He repaired to Mount Vernon, in the delightful prospect of spending the residue of his days in the bosom of domestic life.

With an immaculate character he had passed

through all the complicated transactions of a revolutionary war ; and had established an immortal reputation as a soldier and a patriot, throughout the civilized world. To his retirement he carried the profound veneration and most lively affection of his grateful countrymen. In the estimation of his friends, the measure of his honour was full. The extent of their wishes was, that no unpropitious event might take place to tarnish the lustre of his reputation ; but that in peace he might descend to the grave, with his laurel crown unfaded on his head.



CHAPTER X.

General Washington in Retirement—His Pursuits—Votes of Congress and of the Legislature of Virginia respecting him—His Visitors and Correspondents—His Plans to improve the Navigation of the Potomack and James' Rivers—Declines the grant of Virginia—His Advice to the Cincinnati—State of Publick Affairs—National Convention—General Washington its President—Federal Constitution recommended and adopted—General Washington requested to consent to administer the Government—He is chosen President of the United States—Sets out for the Seat of Government—Attention shown him on his Journey—His Reception at New-York.

1784. PEACE being restored to his country upon the broad basis of Independence, General WASHINGTON with supreme delight retired to the pursuits of private life. In a letter to Governour Clinton, written three days after his arrival at Mount Vernon, he thus expressed the grateful feelings of his heart on being relieved from the weight of his publick station. "The scene is at length closed. I feel myself eased of a load of publick care, and hope to spend the remainder of my days in cultivating the affections of good men, and in the practice of the domestick virtues."

This sentiment was more fully expressed to the Marquis La Fayette. "I have become a private citizen on the banks of the Potomack, and under the sha-

dow of my own vine and own fig tree, free from the bustle of a camp, and the busy scenes of publick life, I am solacing myself with those tranquil enjoyments, of which the soldier who is ever in pursuit of fame, the statesman whose watchful days and sleepless nights are spent in devising schemes to promote the welfare of his own, perhaps the ruin of other countries (as if the globe was insufficient for us all) and the courtier who is always watching the countenance of his Prince in the hope of catching a gracious smile, can have very little conception. I have not only retired from all publick employments, but am retiring within myself, and shall be able to view the solitary walk and tread the paths of private life with heart-felt satisfaction. Envious of none, I am determined to be pleased with all; and this, my dear friend, being the order of my march, I will move down the stream of life, until I sleep with my fathers."

But delighted as he was with his domestick enjoyments, he found it to be the work of time to divest himself of the feelings and habits formed in his publick station. "I am just beginning," said he in a letter to a friend, "to experience the ease and freedom from publick cares, which, however desirable, takes some time to realize; for strange as it may seem, it is nevertheless true, that it was not until lately I could get the better of my usual custom of ruminating as soon as I awoke in the morning, on the business of the ensuing day; and of my surprise at finding, after revolving many things in my mind, that I was no longer a publick man, or had any thing to do with publick transactions. I feel, now however, as I conceive a wearied traveller must do, who, after treading many a painful step with a heavy burden on his shoulders, is eased of the latter, having reached the haven to which all the former were directed, and from his house-top is looking back and tracing with an eager eye, the meanders by which he escaped the quicksands and mires which lay

in his way, and into which none but the all-powerful Guide and Dispenser of human events could have prevented his falling."

Soon after the proclamation of peace, Congress unanimously resolved to erect at the place which should be established as the permanent seat of government, an equestrian statue of General WASHINGTON. This resolution, however, has not yet been carried into effect.

Virginia also bore an honourable testimony of the sense entertained of the services of her distinguished citizen. In a spacious area in the centre of the capital of that state, she erected a marble statue of him, with the following inscription on its pedestal.

"The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia have caused this statue to be erected as a monument of affection and gratitude to GEORGE WASHINGTON, who, uniting in the endowments of the HERO the virtues of the PATRIOT, and exerting both in the establishment of the liberties of his country, has rendered his name dear to his fellow citizens, and given the world an immortal example of true glory."

In addition to these expressions of publick veneration, innumerable addresses from literary and other incorporations were presented to him, which, in ardent language, expressed the veneration universally felt for his character, and the admiration entertained for his services. His well-balanced mind bore these publick and private honours without a symptom of vanity or pride.

The pursuits of General WASHINGTON at this period were a renewal of habits, formed at an earlier part of life, and a recurrence to employments in which he ever took delight; and he experienced nothing of that dissatisfaction and listlessness of which gentlemen often complain, who leave the cares of a publick station for the tranquil scenes of retirement. The improvement of American husbandry engaged his close

attention, and in the prosecution of plans adapted to this purpose, he entered into a correspondence with Mr. Arthur Young, and other distinguished European agriculturists. The result of their information, and of his own experience, he applied, to amend his farming implements, to improve his breed of cattle, and in various experiments, suited to the soil he cultivated. The plans which succeeded with him, he recommended to the farmers around him.

But even in the shade of Mount Vernon, the time of General WASHINGTON was not wholly at his own disposal. Every foreigner of distinction who visited the United States was urgent for an introduction to the late Commander in Chief; and every American of any consequence, who was about to cross the Atlantick, was ambitious to obtain letters from him to celebrated characters in Europe. With numbers of the officers of the late army, with many of the political characters of his own country, and with several eminent individuals of Europe, he held a correspondence. Ceremonious visitors and officious correspondents became oppressive to him, and in a letter to a friend, he thus complained of the burden of them. "It is not, my dear Sir, the letters of my friends which give me trouble, or add ought to my perplexity. I receive them with pleasure, and pay as much attention to them as my avocations will permit. It is references to old matters with which I have nothing to do; applications which often times cannot be complied with; inquiries to satisfy which would employ the pen of an historian; letters of compliment, as unmeaning, perhaps, as they are troublesome, but which must be attended to; and the common place business, which employ my pen and my time, often disagreeably. Indeed these, with company, deprive me of exercise; and unless I can obtain relief, must be productive of disagreeable consequences. Already, I begin to feel their effects. Heavy and painful oppressions of the head, and other disa-

agreeable sensations often trouble me. I am therefore determined to employ some person who shall ease me of the *drudgery* of this business.—To correspond with those I love is among my highest gratifications. Letters of friendship require no study; the communications they contain flow with ease; and allowances are expected and are made. But this is not the case with those which require research, consideration, and recollection." At length he engaged a young gentleman of talents and education, who relieved him from a great part of these irksome attentions.

The patriotick mind of General WASHINGTON could not however be engrossed by his own concerns. In his retirement, he with solicitude watched over the interests of his country. The improvement of its inland navigation early engaged his reflections. Plans which the war had interrupted, were now resumed upon an enlarged scale. This year he visited the western country as far as Pittsburg, and having collected the necessary information, he opened his scheme to Mr. Harrison, then Governour of Virginia. This was to render the rivers Potomack and James navigable as high as practicable; to take accurate surveys of the country between these rivers and the streams which empty into the Ohio, and find the most advantageous portages between them; to survey the waters west of the Ohio, which empty into the lakes; and to open such inland navigation between these waters, as would secure the trade of the western country to Virginia and Maryland. "Nature," he observed, "had made such an ample display of her bounties in these regions, that the more the country was explored the more it would rise in estimation." He was persuaded that Pennsylvania and New-York would adopt measures, to direct the trade of that country to their seaports, and he was anxious that his native state should seasonably avail herself of the advantages she possessed to secure her share in it. "I am not," he declared,

“for discouraging the exertions of any state to draw the commerce of the western country to its sea-ports. The more communications we open to it, the closer we bind that rising world, (for it indeed may be so called) to our interests, and the greater strength shall we acquire by it. Those to whom nature affords the best communication, will, if they are wise, enjoy the greatest share of the trade. All I would be understood to mean therefore, is, that the gifts of Providence may not be neglected.” But political motives had higher influence in this transaction than commercial. “I need not remark to you, Sir,” said he in his communication to the Governour of Virginia, “that the flanks and rear of the United States are possessed by other powers, and formidable ones too; nor need I press the necessity of applying the cement of interest to bind all parts of the union together by indissoluble bonds; especially of binding that part of it which lies immediately west of us, to the middle states. For what ties, let me ask, should we have upon those people, how entirely unconnected with them shall we be, and what troubles may we not apprehend, if the Spaniards on their right, and Great Britain on their left, instead of throwing impediments in their way as they now do, should hold out lures for their trade and alliance? When they get strength, which will be sooner than most people conceive, what will be the consequence of their having formed close commercial connexions with both, or either of those powers, it needs not, in my opinion, the gift of prophecy to foretell.

“The western settlers (I speak now from my own observations) stand as it were upon a pivot. The touch of a feather would turn them any way. Until the Spaniards (very unwisely as I think) threw difficulties in their way, they looked down the Mississippi; and they looked that way for no other reason than because they could gently glide down the stream; without considering perhaps the fatigues of the voyage back

again, and the time necessary for its performance; and because they have no other means of coming to us, but by a long land transportation through unimproved roads."

These recommendations were not lost. Under the patronage of the governments of Virginia and Maryland, two companies were formed for opening the navigation of the Potomack and the James. Of both which General WASHINGTON consented to be the president. The Legislature of Virginia by a resolution which passed unanimously, directed the treasurer of the state to subscribe for one hundred and fifty shares in each company for the benefit of General WASHINGTON. The appropriation was made in a manner the most affecting to a noble mind. The assembly expressed a wish, that while the improvements of their inland navigation were monuments of his glory, they might also be monuments of his country's gratitude. The donation placed him in a very delicate and embarrassed situation. The feelings excited by this generous and honourable act of his state, he fully expressed to the friend, who informed him of the passage of the bill. "It is not easy for me to decide by which my mind was most affected upon the receipt of your letter of the sixth instant—surprise or gratitude. Both were greater than I had words to express. The attention and good wishes which the assembly has evidenced by their act for vesting in me one hundred and fifty shares in the navigation of the rivers Potomack and James, is more than mere compliment—there is an unequivocal and substantial meaning annexed. But, believe me, Sir, no circumstance has happened since I left the walks of publick life which has so much embarrassed me. On the one hand, I consider this act, as I have already observed, as a noble and unequivocal proof of the good opinion, the affection, and disposition of my country to serve me; and I should be hurt, if by declining the acceptance of it, my refusal should be

construed into disrespect, or the smallest slight upon the general intention of the Legislature; or that an ostentatious display of disinterestedness, or publick virtue, was the source of refusal.

“ On the other hand, it is really my wish to have my mind and my actions, which are the result of reflection, as free and independent as the air, that I may be more at liberty (in things which my opportunities and experience have brought me to the knowledge of) to express my sentiments, and if necessary, to suggest what may occur to me, under the fullest conviction that although my judgment may be arraigned, there will be no suspicion that sinister motives had the smallest influence in the suggestion. Not content then with the bare consciousness of my having in all this navigation business, acted upon the clearest conviction of the political importance of the measure: I would wish that every individual who may hear that it was a favourite plan of mine, may know also, that I had no other motive for promoting it, than the advantage of which I conceived it would be productive to the union at large, and to this state in particular, by cementing the eastern and western territory together, at the same time that it will give vigour and increase to our commerce, and be a convenience to our citizens.

“ How would this matter be viewed then by the eye of the world, and what opinion would be formed when it comes to be related that G***** W*****ⁿ exerted himself to effect this work, and that G***** W*****ⁿ has received *twenty thousand dollars* and *five thousand pounds* sterling of the publick money as an interest therein? Would not this (if I am entitled to any merit for the part I have performed, and without it there is no foundation for the act) deprive me of the principal thing which is laudable in my conduct? Would it not in some respects be considered in the same light as a pension? And would not the

apprehension of this induce me to offer my sentiments in future with the more reluctance? In a word under whatever pretence, and however customary these gratuities may be in other countries, should I not thenceforward be considered as a dependant? One moment's thought of which would give me more pain than I should receive pleasure from the product of all the tolls, was every farthing of them vested in me."

After great deliberation, he determined to appropriate the shares to such publick uses as the Legislature should approve. In communicating this determination through the Governour, to the General Assembly, he begged him to assure them that he was "filled on the occasion with every sentiment which can flow from a heart, warm with love to his country, sensible to every token of its approbation and affection, and solicitous to testify in every instance a respectful attention to its wishes." According to his desire, the shares were appropriated to the support of a college in the vicinity of each of those rivers.

The Cincinnati had in their original constitution secured perpetuity of existence to their society. The eldest male posterity of the officers were to succeed to the places of their fathers, and in the failure of them, a collateral branch might be introduced. Individuals also of the respective states, distinguished for their talents and patriotism, might be admitted as honorary members for life. In this part of the institution, some American patriots thought they perceived the seeds of an order of nobility, and publick jealousy was excited against the society. General WASHINGTON, their President, conceived that if popular prejudices could not be removed, the society ought "to yield to them in a degree, and not suffer that which was intended for the best of purposes to produce a bad one." On full inquiry, he found that objections to the institution were general throughout the United States, under the apprehension that it would prove dangerous

to publick liberty, he therefore exerted his influence among the officers to induce them to drop the offensive part of the institution, and at the annual meeting in May 1787, the hereditary principle, and the power to adopt honorary members, were expunged from the constitution. This modification fully removed the publick apprehension.

Experience proved the articles under which the United States originally confederated to be inadequate to the purposes of national government ; and wise and good men in every part of the union anxiously looked forward to a crisis in publick affairs. Many of General WASHINGTON's friends intimated to him that the occasion would call for his personal influence. Mr. Jay, in letters written in the spring and summer of 1786, with feeling described the state of the country, " You have wisely retired from publick employments, and calmly view from the temple of fame, the various exertions of that sovereignty and independence, which Providence has enabled you to be so greatly and gloriously instrumental in securing to your country, yet I am persuaded that you cannot view them with the eye of an unconcerned spectator.

" Experience has pointed out errors in our national government which call for correction, and which threaten to blast the fruit we expected from the tree of liberty. An opinion begins to prevail that a general convention for revising the articles of confederation would be expedient. Whether the people are yet ripe for such a measure, or whether the system proposed to be obtained by it is only to be expected from calamity and commotion is difficult to ascertain.

" I think we are in a delicate situation, and a variety of considerations and circumstances give me uneasiness. It is in contemplation to take measures for forming a general convention. The plan is not matured. If it should be well connected and take effect, I am fervent in my wishes that it may comport with

the line of life you have marked out for yourself, to favour your country with your counsels on such an important and single occasion.

"Our affairs seem to lead to some crisis, something that I cannot foresee or conjecture. I am uneasy and apprehensive, more so than during the war. Then we had a fixed object, and though the means and time of obtaining it were problematical, yet I did firmly believe that we should ultimately succeed, because I did firmly believe that justice was with us. The case is now altered. We are going and doing wrong, and therefore I look forward to evils and calamities, but without being able to guess at the instrument, nature, or measure of them.

"That we shall again recover, and things again go well, I have no doubt. Such a variety of circumstances would not, almost miraculously, have combined to liberate and make us a nation, for transient and unimportant purposes. I therefore believe that we are yet to become a great and respectable people; but when or how, only the spirit of prophecy can discern.

"What I most fear is, that the better kind of people (by which I mean the people who are orderly and industrious, who are content with their situations, and not uneasy in their circumstances) will be led by the insecurity of property, the loss of confidence in their rulers, and the want of publick faith and rectitude, to consider the charms of liberty as imaginary and delusive. A state of uncertainty and fluctuation must disgust and alarm such men, and prepare their minds for almost any change that may promise them quiet and security."

To these weighty communications General WASHINGTON replied.

"Your sentiments that our affairs are drawing rapidly to a crisis, accord with my own. What the event will be, is also beyond the reach of my foresight. We have errors to correct; we have probably had

too good an opinion of human nature, in forming our confederation. Experience has taught us that men will not adopt and carry into execution, measures the best calculated for their own good, without the intervention of coercive power. I do not conceive we can exist long as a nation, without lodging, somewhere, a power which will pervade the whole Union in as energetick a manner, as the authority of the state governments extends over the several states. To be fearful of investing Congress, constituted as that body is, with ample authorities for national purposes, appears to me the very climax of popular absurdity and madness. Could Congress exert them for the detriment of the people, without injuring themselves in an equal or greater proportion? Are not their interests inseparably connected with those of their constituents? By the rotation of appointments, must they not mingle frequently with the mass of citizens? Is it not rather to be apprehended, if they were not possessed of the powers before described, that the individual members would be induced to use them, on many occasions, very timidly and inefficaciously, for fear of losing their popularity and future election? We must take human nature as we find it; perfection falls not to the share of mortals.

“What then is to be done? Things cannot go on in the same strain for ever. It is much to be feared, as you observe, that the better kind of people, being disgusted with these circumstances, will have their minds prepared for any revolution whatever. We are apt to run from one extreme to another. To anticipate and prevent disastrous contingencies, would be the part of wisdom and patriotism.

“What astonishing changes a few years are capable of producing! I am told that even respectable characters speak of a monarchical form of government without horror. From thinking proceeds speaking, thence to acting is often but a single step. But how irrevoca-

ble and tremendous ! what a triumph for our enemies to verify their predictions ! what a triumph for the advocates of despotism to find that we are incapable of governing ourselves, and that systems, founded on the basis of equal liberty, are merely ideal and fallacious ! Would to God that wise measures may be taken in time to avert the consequences we have but too much reason to apprehend.

“ Retired as I am from the world, I frankly acknowledge I cannot feel myself an unconcerned spectator. Yet having happily assisted in bringing the ship into port, and having been fairly discharged, it is not my business to embark again on the sea of troubles.

“ Nor could it be expected that my sentiments and opinions would have much weight on the minds of my countrymen. They have been neglected, though given as a last legacy in a most solemn manner. I then perhaps had some claims to publick attention. I consider myself as having none at present.”

When the plan of a Convention was ripened, and its meeting appointed to be at Philadelphia in May, 1787, a respectable character in Virginia, communicated to General WASHINGTON the intention of that state to elect him one of her representatives, on this important occasion. He explicitly declined being a candidate, yet the Legislature placed him at the head of her delegation, in the hope that mature reflection would induce him to attend upon the service. The Governor of the state, Mr. Randolph, informed him of his appointment, by the following letter. “ By the enclosed act you will readily discover that the Assembly are alarmed at the storms which threaten the United States. What our enemies have foretold seems to be hastening to its accomplishment, and cannot be frustrated but by an instantaneous, zealous, and steady union among the friends of the federal government. To you I need not press our present dangers. The inefficacy of Congress you have often felt in your offi-

sial character ; the increasing languor of our associated republicks you hourly see ; and a dissolution would be, I know, to you, a source of the deepest mortification. I freely then entreat you to accept the unanimous appointment of the General Assembly to the Convention at Philadelphia. For the gloomy prospect still admits one ray of hope, that those who began, carried on, and consummated the revolution, can yet restore America from the impending ruin."

"Sensible as I am," said the General in his answer, "of the honour conferred on me by the General Assembly of this commonwealth, in appointing me one of the deputies to a Convention proposed to be held in the city of Philadelphia in May next, for the purpose of revising the federal constitution ; and desirous as I am on all occasions of testifying a ready obedience to the calls of my country—yet, Sir, there exist at this moment, circumstances which I am persuaded will render this fresh instance of confidence incompatible with other measures which I had previously adopted, and from which seeing little prospect of disengaging myself, it would be disingenuous not to express a wish that some other character on whom greater reliance can be had, may be substituted in my place, the probability of my non-attendance being too great to continue my appointment.

"As no mind can be more deeply impressed than mine is with the critical situation of our affairs, resulting in a great measure from the want of efficient powers in the federal head, and due respect to its ordinances, so consequently those who do engage in the important business of removing these defects, will carry with them every good wish of mine, which the best dispositions towards their obtainment can bestow."

The Governour declined the acceptance of his resignation of the appointment, and begged him to suspend his determination until the approach of the period of the meeting of Convention, that his final judg-

ment might be the result of a full acquaintance with all circumstances.

Thus situated, the General reviewed the subject, that he might upon thorough deliberation make the decision which duty and patriotism enjoined. He had, by a circular letter to the state societies, declined being re-elected the President of the Cincinnati, and had announced that he should not attend their general meeting at Philadelphia on the next May; and he apprehended, that if he attended the Convention at the time and place of their meeting, that he should give offence to all the officers of the late army who composed this body. He was under apprehension that the states would not be generally represented on this occasion, and that a failure in the plan would diminish the personal influence of those who engaged in it. Some of his confidential friends were of opinion that the occasion did not require his interposition, and that he ought to reserve himself for a state of things which would unequivocally demand his agency and influence. Even on the supposition that the plan should succeed, they thought that he ought not to engage in it; because his having been in Convention would obligate him to make exertions to carry the measures that body might recommend, into effect, and would necessarily "sweep him into the tide of publick affairs." His own experience since the close of the revolutionary war created in his mind serious doubts, whether the respective states would quietly adopt any system, calculated to give stability and vigour to the national government. "As we could not," to use his own language, "remain quiet more than three or four years in times of peace, under the constitutions of our own choosing, which were believed in many states to have been formed with deliberation and wisdom, I see little prospect either of our agreeing on any other, or that we should remain long satisfied under it, if we could. Yet I would wish any thing

and every thing essayed to prevent the effusion of blood, and to divert the humiliating and contemptible figure we are about to make in the annals of mankind."

These considerations operated powerfully to confirm him in the opinion first formed not to attend the Convention.

On the other hand, he realized the greatness of the publick stake. The confederation was universally considered as a nullity. The advice of a Convention, composed of respectable characters from every part of the union, would probably have great influence with the community, whether it should be to amend the articles of the old government, or to form a new constitution.

Amidst the various sentiments which at this time prevailed, respecting the state of publick affairs, many entertained the supposition that the "times must be worse before they could be better," and that the American people could be induced to establish an efficient and liberal national government only by the scourge of anarchy. Some seemed to think that the experiment of a republican government in America had already failed, and that one, more energetick, must soon by violence be introduced. General WASHINGTON entertained some apprehension, that his declining to attend the Convention would be considered as a dereliction of republican principles.

While he was balancing these opposite circumstances in his mind, the insurrection of Massachusetts occurred, which turned the scale of opinion in favour of his joining the Convention. He viewed this event as awfully alarming. "For God's sake tell me," said he in a letter to Colonel Humphreys, "what is the cause of all these commotions? Do they proceed from licentiousness, British influence disseminated by the tories, or real grievances which admit of redress? If the latter, why was redress delayed until the publick mind had become so much agitated? If the former, why are

not the powers of government tried at once? It is as well to be without as not to exercise them."

To General Knox and other friends, similar apprehensions were expressed. "I feel infinitely more than I can express to you, for the disorders which have arisen in these states. Good God! who besides a tory could have foreseen, or a Briton have predicted them? I do assure you that even at this moment, when I reflect upon the present aspect of our affairs, it seems to me like the visions of a dream. My mind can scarcely realize it as a thing in actual existence:—So strange, so wonderful, does it appear to me. In this, as in most other matters, we are too slow. When this spirit first dawned, it might probably have been easily checked; but it is scarcely within the reach of human ken, at this moment, to say when, where, or how, it will terminate. There are combustibles in every state, to which a spark might set fire. In bewailing, which I have often done with the keenest sorrow, the death of our much lamented friend General Greene, I have accompanied my regrets of late with a query whether he would not have preferred such an exit, to the scenes which it is more than probable many of his compatriots may live to bemoan.——

"You talk, my good sir, of employing influence to appease the present tumults in Massachusetts. I know not where that influence is to be found; nor if attainable, that it would be a proper remedy for these disorders. *Influence is not government.* Let us have a *government* by which our lives, liberties, and properties will be secured; or let us know the worst at once. Under these impressions my humble opinion is that there is a call for decision. Know then precisely what the insurgents aim at. If they have *real* grievances, redress them if possible; or acknowledge the justice of them, and your inability to do it in the present moment. If they have not, employ the force of the government against them at once. If this is inade-

quate, all will be convinced that the superstructure is bad, or wants support. To be more exposed in the eyes of the world, and more contemptible than we already are, is hardly possible. To delay one or the other of these expedients is to exasperate on the one hand, or to give confidence on the other, and will add to their numbers ; for, like snow-balls, such bodies increase by every movement, unless there is something in the way to obstruct and crumble them, before their weight is too great and irresistible.

"These are my sentiments. Precedents are dangerous things. Let the reins of government then be braced, and held with a steady hand ; and every violation of the Constitution be reprehended. If defective, let it be amended, but not suffered to be trampled upon while it has an existence."

A friend having intimated by letter his apprehension, that civil discord was near, in which event he would be obliged to act a publick part, or to leave the continent. "It is," said the General in reply, "with the deepest and most heart-felt concern, I perceive, by some late paragraphs extracted from the Boston papers, that the insurgents of Massachusetts, far from being satisfied with the redress offered by their General Court, are still acting in open violation of law and government, and have obliged the Chief Magistrate, in a decided tone, to call upon the militia of the state to support the constitution.

"What, gracious God, is man ! That there should be such inconsistency and perfidiousness in his conduct. It is but the other day, that we were shedding our blood to obtain the constitutions under which we live ; constitutions of our own choice and making ; and now we are unsheathing the sword to overturn them. The thing is so unaccountable that I hardly know how to realize it ; or to persuade myself that I am not under the illusion of a dream. My mind, previous to the receipt of your letter of the first ultimo,

had often been agitated by a thought similar to the one you expressed respecting a friend of yours ; but heaven forbid that a crisis should come when he shall be driven to the necessity of making a choice of either of the alternatives there mentioned."

Having learned that the states had generally elected their representatives to the Convention, and Congress having given its sanction to it, he on the 28th of March communicated to the Governour of Virginia, his consent to act as one of the delegates of his state on this important occasion.

On the second Monday in May 1787, the delegates of twelve states met in Convention at Philadelphia, and unanimously elected General GEORGE WASHINGTON their President. The present Constitution of Government of the United States was the result of the deliberations and concessions of this venerable body.

Although the friends of General WASHINGTON had fully acquiesced in the propriety of his retiring from publick life at the close of the revolutionary war, yet from the moment of the adoption of the Federal Constitution, all eyes were directed to him as the first President of the United States. His correspondents early endeavoured to prepare his mind to gratify the expectations of his country. Mr. Johnson, a distinguished patriot of Maryland, wrote him, " We cannot do without you, and I and thousands more can explain to any body but yourself why we cannot do without you."

The struggle between inclination and duty was long and severe. His feelings on this occasion fully appeared in the letters which he wrote to his friends on the subject. Colonel Lee, then a member of Congress, communicating to General WASHINGTON the measures which that body were adopting to introduce the new government, thus alludes to the presidency.

" The solemnity of the moment, and its application to yourself, have fixed my mind in contemplations of

a publick and a personal nature, and I feel an involuntary impulse which I cannot resist, to communicate, without reserve to you some of the reflections which the hour has produced. Solicitous for our common happiness as a people, and convinced, as I continue to be, that our peace and prosperity depend on the proper improvement of the present period, my anxiety is extreme that the new government may have an auspicious beginning. To effect this, and to perpetuate a nation formed under your auspices, it is certain you will again be called forth. The same principles of devotion to the good of mankind, which have invariably governed your conduct, will no doubt continue to rule your mind, however opposite their consequences may be to your repose and happiness. It may be wrong, but I cannot suppress in my wishes for national felicity a due regard for your personal fame and content.

"If the same success should attend your efforts on this important occasion which has distinguished you hitherto, then, to be sure, you will have spent a life which Providence rarely, if ever, before gave to the lot of man. It is my anxious hope, it is my belief that this will be the case; but all things are uncertain, and perhaps nothing more so than political events.

"Without you, the government can have but little chance of success; and the people, of that happiness which its prosperity must yield."

To these communications, the General thus replied:

"Your observations on the solemnity of the crisis, and its application to myself, bring before me subjects of the most momentous and interesting nature. In our endeavours to establish a new general government, the contest, nationally considered, seems not to have been so much for glory, as existence. It was for a long time doubtful whether we were to survive as an independent republick, or decline from our federal dignity into insignificant and wretched fragments of empire. The adoption of the constitution so extensively,

and with so liberal an acquiescence on the part of the minorities in general, promised the former ; but lately, the circular letter of New-York has manifested in my apprehension an unfavourable, if not an insidious tendency to a contrary policy. I still hope for the best ; but before you mentioned it, I could not help fearing it would serve as a standard to which the disaffected could resort. It is now evidently the part of all honest men, who are friends to the new constitution, to endeavour to give it a chance to disclose its merits and defects by carrying it fairly into effect, in the first instance.

“The principal topick of your letter is, to me, a point of great delicacy indeed, insomuch that I can scarcely, without some impropriety, touch upon it. In the first place, the event to which you allude may never happen, among other reasons because, if the partiality of my fellow-citizens conceive it to be a mean by which the sinews of the new government would be strengthened, it will of consequence be obnoxious to those who are in opposition to it ; many of whom, unquestionably, will be placed among the electors. This consideration alone would supersede the expediency of announcing any definitive and irrevocable resolution. You are among the small number of those who know my invincible attachment to domestic life, and that my sincerest wish is to continue in the enjoyment of it solely, until my final hour. But the world would be neither so well instructed, nor so candidly disposed, as to believe me to be uninfluenced by sinister motives in case any circumstance should render a deviation from the line of conduct I had prescribed for myself indispensable. Should the contingency you suggest, take place, and (for argument's sake alone let me say) should my unfeigned reluctance to accept the office be overcome by a deference for the reasons and opinions of my friends ; might I not, after the declarations I have made, (and heaven knows they were made in the sincerity of my heart) in the judg-

ment of the impartial world, and of posterity, be chargeable with levity and inconsistency, if not with rashness and ambition? Nay, farther, would there not even be some apparent foundation for the two former charges? Now, justice to myself, and tranquillity of conscience require that I should act a part, if not above imputation, at least capable of vindication. Nor will you conceive me to be too solicitous for reputation. Though I prize as I ought the good opinion of my fellow-citizens, yet if I know myself, I would not seek popularity at the expense of one social duty, or moral virtue.

“ While doing what my conscience informed me was right, as it respected my God, my country, and myself, I could despise all the party clamour and unjust censure which must be expected from some, whose personal enmity might be occasioned by their hostility to the government. I am conscious that I fear alone to give any real occasion for obloquy, and that I do not dread to meet with unmerited reproach. And certain I am, whensoever I shall be convinced the good of my country requires my reputation to be put in risk, regard for my own fame will not come in competition with an object of so much magnitude.

“ If I declined the task, it would be upon quite another principle. Notwithstanding my advanced season of life, my increasing fondness for agricultural amusements, and my growing love of retirement, augment and confirm my decided predeliction for the character of a private citizen, yet it will be no one of these motives, nor the hazard to which my former reputation might be exposed, or the terror of encountering new fatigues and troubles, that would deter me from an acceptance; but a belief that some other person, who had less pretence and less inclination to be excused, could execute all the duties full as satisfactorily as myself. To say more would be indiscreet; as the disclosure of a refusal beforehand might incur the

application of the fable, in which the fox is represented as undervaluing the grapes he could not reach. You will perceive, my dear sir, by what is here observed (and which you will be pleased to consider in the light of a confidential communication) that my inclinations will dispose and decide me to remain as I am; unless a clear and insurmountable conviction should be impressed on my mind, that some very disagreeable consequences must in all human probability result from the indulgence of my wishes."

To similar suggestions from Colonel Hamilton, General WASHINGTON replied. "On the delicate subject with which you conclude your letter I can say nothing; because the event alluded to may never happen, and because in case it should occur, it would be a point of prudence to defer forming one's ultimate and irrevocable decision, so long as new data might be afforded for one to act with the greater wisdom and propriety. I would not wish to conceal my prevailing sentiment from you. For you know me well enough, my good sir, to be persuaded that I am not guilty of affectation, when I tell you it is my great and sole desire to live and die in peace and retirement on my own farm. Were it even indispensable a different line of conduct should be adopted, while you and some others who are acquainted with my heart would acquit, the world and posterity might probably *accuse* me of *inconsistency* and *ambition*. Still I hope I shall always possess firmness and virtue enough to maintain (what I consider the most enviable of all titles) the character of *an honest man*.

"Although I could not help observing from several publications and letters that my name had been sometimes spoken of, and that it was possible that *contingency* which is the subject of your letter might happen, yet I thought it best to maintain a guarded silence, and to lack the counsel of my best friends (which I certainly hold in the highest estimation) ra-

ther than to hazard an imputation unfriendly to the delicacy of my feelings. For, situated as I am, I could hardly bring the question into the slightest discussion, or ask an opinion even in the most confidential manner, without betraying in my judgment, some impropriety of conduct, or without feeling an apprehension that a premature display of anxiety might be construed into a vain glorious desire of pushing myself into notice as a candidate. Now, if I am not grossly deceived in myself, I should unfeignedly rejoice, in case the electors, by giving their votes in favour of some other person, would save me from the dreadful dilemma of being forced to accept or refuse. If that may not be, I am in the next place, earnestly desirous of searching out the truth, and of knowing whether there does not exist a probability that the government would be just as happily and effectually carried into execution without my aid, as with it. I am truly solicitous to obtain all the previous information which the circumstances will afford, and to determine (when the determination can with propriety be no longer postponed) according to the principles of right reason, and the dictates of a clear conscience; without too great a reference to the unforeseen consequences which may affect my person or reputation. Until that period, I may fairly hold myself open to conviction, though I allow your sentiments to have weight in them; and I shall not pass by your arguments without giving them as dispassionate a consideration as I can possibly bestow upon them.

“In taking a survey of the subject, in whatever point of light I have been able to place it, I will not suppress the acknowledgment, my dear sir, that I have always felt a kind of gloom upon my mind, as often as I have been taught to expect I might, and perhaps must ere long be called to make a decision. You will, I am well assured, believe the assertion (though I have little expectation it would gain credit from those

who are less acquainted with me) that if I should receive the appointment, and should be prevailed upon to accept it ; the acceptance would be attended with more diffidence and reluctance, than ever I experienced before in my life. It would be, however, with a fixed and sole determination of lending whatever assistance might be in my power to promote the publick weal, in hopes that at a convenient and early period, my services might be dispensed with ; and that I might be permitted once more to retire—to pass an unclouded evening after the stormy day of life, in the bosom of domestick tranquillity.”

We have already made copious extracts from the letters of the General on the subject of the Presidency ; but as they clearly describe his feelings and views on the near prospect of being again summoned by his country into publick life, they must be interesting to all. We will close them with the following communications made to General Lincoln, who had also communicated to him the expectation of his friends, “I would willingly pass over in silence that part of your letter, in which you mention the persons who are candidates for the two first offices in the executive, if I did not fear the omission might seem to betray a want of confidence. Motives of delicacy have prevented me hitherto from conversing or writing on this subject, whenever I could avoid it with decency. I may, however, with great sincerity, and I believe without offending against modesty or propriety, *say to you*, that I most heartily wish the choice to which you allude might not fall upon me ; and that if it should, I must reserve to myself the right of making up my final decision, at the last moment, when it can be brought into one view, and when the expediency or inexpediency of a refusal can be more judiciously determined than at present. But be assured, my dear sir, if from any inducement I shall be persuaded ultimately to accept, it will not be (so far as I know my own heart)

from any of a private or personal nature. Every personal consideration conspires to rivet me (if I may use the expression) to retirement. At my time of life, and under my circumstances, nothing in this world can ever draw me from it, unless it be a conviction that the partiality of my countrymen had made my services absolutely necessary, joined to a fear that my refusal might induce a belief that I preferred the conservation of my own reputation and private ease, to the good of my country. After all, if I should conceive myself in a manner constrained to accept, I call heaven to witness, that this very act would be the greatest sacrifice of my personal feelings and wishes that ever I have been called upon to make. It would be to forego repose and domestick enjoyment for trouble, perhaps publick obloquy ; for I should consider myself as entering upon an unexplored field, enveloped on every side with clouds and darkness.

“ From this embarrassing situation I had naturally supposed that my declarations at the close of the war would have saved me ; and that my sincere intentions, then publicly made known, would have effectually precluded me for ever afterwards from being looked upon as a candidate for any office. This hope, as a last anchor of worldly happiness in old age, I had still carefully preserved ; until the publick papers, and private letters from my correspondents in almost every quarter, taught me to apprehend that I might soon be obliged to answer the question, whether I would go again into publick life or not.”

In event it appeared, that amidst the discordance of opinion, respecting the merits of the Federal Constitution, there was but one sentiment, through the United States, respecting the man who should administer the government. On counting the votes of the electors of President and Vice President, it was found that General GEORGE WASHINGTON had their unani-

mous suffrage, and was chosen President of the United States for four years from the 4th of March 1789.

On the 14th of April, official information reached him of his election. Having already made up his mind to obey the summons of a whole country, on the second day after this notification, he quitted the quiet walks of Mount Vernon for the arduous duties of the supreme magistracy of his nation. Although grateful for this renewed declaration of the favourable opinion of the community, yet his determination to accept the office was accompanied with diffidence and apprehension. "I wish," he observed, "that there may not be reason for regretting the choice, for indeed all I can promise is, to accomplish that which can be done by an honest zeal." The feelings, with which he entered upon publick life, he left upon his private journal.

"About ten o'clock, I bade adieu to Mount Vernon, to private life, and to domestick felicity; and with a mind oppressed with more anxious and painful sensations than I have words to express, set out for New-York, with the best dispositions to render service to my country in obedience to its call, but with less hope of answering its expectations."

He was met on the road by the gentlemen of Alexandria, and conducted to a publick dinner. From the numerous addresses presented to the General on this occasion, we select that of the citizens of Alexandria, because it is a testimonial of the affection and veneration in which his neighbours and friends held his private as well as publick character, and because, in itself, it has peculiar interest. The following is the address:

"Again your country commands your care. Obedient to its wishes, unmindful of your ease, we see you again relinquishing the bliss of retirement, and this too at a period of life, when nature itself seems to authorize a preference of repose!

"Not to extol your glory as a soldier; not to pour forth our gratitude for past services; not to acknow-

ledge the justice of the unexampled honour which has been conferred upon you by the spontaneous and unanimous suffrages of three millions of freemen, in your election to the supreme magistracy ; nor to admire the patriotism which directs your conduct, do your neighbours and friends now address you. Themes less splendid, but more endearing, impress our minds. The first and best of citizens must leave us. Our aged must lose their ornament ; our youth their model ; our agriculture its improver ; our commerce its friend ; our infant academy its protector ; our poor their benefactor, and the interior navigation of the Potomack (an event replete with the most extensive utility already, by your unremitted exertions, brought into partial use) its institutor and promoter.

“ Farewell !—go ! and make a grateful people happy, a people, who will be doubly grateful when they contemplate this recent sacrifice for their interest.

“ To that Being, who maketh and unmaketh at his will, we commend you ; and after the accomplishment of the arduous business to which you are called, may he restore to us again, the best of men, and the most beloved fellow citizen !”

To which General WASHINGTON replied as follows :

“ GENTLEMEN,

“ Although I ought not to conceal, yet I cannot describe the painful emotions which I felt in being called upon to determine whether I would accept or refuse the Presidency of the United States. The unanimity in the choice, the opinion of my friends communicated from different parts of Europe as well as from America, the apparent wish of those who were not entirely satisfied with the constitution in its present form ; and an ardent desire on my own part to be instrumental in connecting the good will of my countrymen towards each other, have induced an acceptance. Those who know me best (and you, my fellow citizens, are, from your situation, in that number) know better than any

where my love of retirement is so great, that no earthly consideration, short of a conviction of duty, could have prevailed upon me to depart from my resolution never more to take any share in transactions of a publick nature. For at my age, and in my circumstances, what prospects or advantages could I propose to myself, from embarking again on the tempestuous and uncertain ocean of publick life? I do not feel myself under the necessity of making publick declarations, in order to convince you, gentlemen, of my attachment to yourselves, and regard for your interests. The whole tenour of my life has been open to your inspection; and my past actions, rather than my present declarations, must be the pledge of my future conduct.

"In the mean time I thank you most sincerely for the expressions of kindness contained in your valedictory address. It is true, just after having bade adieu to my domestick connexions, this tender proof of your friendships is but too well calculated still farther to awaken my sensibility, and increase my regret at parting from the enjoyments of private life.

"All that now remains for me is to commit myself and you to the protection of that beneficent Being who, on a former occasion, hath happily brought us together after a long and distressing separation. Perhaps the same gracious Providence will again indulge me. Unutterable sensations must then be left to mere expressive silence—while from an aching heart, I bid you all, my affectionate friends, and kind neighbours, farewell!"

It was the wish of General WASHINGTON to avoid parade on his journey to the seat of government, but he found it impossible. Numerous bodies of respectable citizens, and detachments from the militia escorted him the whole distance, and at every place through which he passed, he received the most flattering evidence of the high estimation, in which his countrymen held his talents and his virtues.

Gray's bridge over the Schuylkill was, with much taste, embellished on the occasion. At each end arches were erected composed of laurel, in imitation of a Roman triumphal arch; and on each side was a laurel shrubbery. As the General passed, a youth by the aid of machinery (unperceived by him) let down upon his head a civick crown. Through avenues and streets thronged with people, he passed from the Schuylkill into Philadelphia, and at night the city was illuminated.

At Trenton, the ladies presented him with a tribute of gratitude for the protection which, twelve years before, he gave them, worthy of the taste and refinement of the sex. On the bridge over the creek which runs through this place, a triumphal arch was erected on thirteen pillars; these were entwined with laurel and decorated with flowers. On the front of the arch was the following inscription, in large gilt letters,

THE DEFENDER OF THE MOTHERS

WILL BE THE

PROTECTOR OF THE DAUGHTERS.

On the centre of the arch above the inscription was a dome of flowers and evergreens encircling the dates of two events particularly interesting to the inhabitants of New-Jersey, viz. the successful assault on the Hessian post in Trenton, and the gallant stand made by General WASHINGTON at the same creek on the evening preceding the battle of Princeton. A numerous party of matrons, holding their daughters in their hands, who were dressed in white and held on their arms baskets of flowers, assembled at this place, and on his approach the daughters sung the following ode,

Welcome, Mighty Chief, once more
Welcome to this grateful shore;
Now no mercenary foe
Aims again the fatal blow,
Aims at THEE the fatal blow.

Virgins fair and matrons grave
Those thy conquering arms did save,
Build for THEE triumphal bowers;
Strew ye fair his way with flowers,
Strew your HERO's way with flowers.

At the last line the flowers were strewed before him.

On the eastern shore of New-Jersey, he was met by a Committee of Congress, and accompanied over the river in an elegant barge, of thirteen oars, and manned by thirteen branch pilots.

"The display of boats," observes the General in his diary, "which attended and joined on this occasion, some with vocal and others with instrumental musick on board, the decorations of the ships, the roar of cannon, and the loud acclamations of the people which rent the sky as I passed along the wharves, filled my mind with sensations as painful (contemplating the reverse of this scene, which may be the case after all my endeavours to do good) as they were pleasing."

He landed on the 23d of April at the stairs on Murray's wharf, which were highly ornamented for the purpose. At this place the Governour of New-York received him, and with military honours, and amidst an immense concourse of people, conducted him to his apartments in the city. At the close of the day, Foreign Ministers and other characters of distinction, made him congratulatory visits, and the publick exhibition was at night closed by a brilliant illumination.

CHAPTER XI.

Inauguration of the President—His Address to Congress—Answers of the two Houses—The Arrangements of his Household—His Regulations for Visitors—The Reasons of their adoption—The Relations of the United States with Foreign Powers—Congress establishes the Departments of the Government—The President fills them—He visits New-England—His Reception—Addresses to him—His Answers—Negotiations with the Indians—Treaty with the Creeks—War with the Wabash and Miami Tribes—General Harmer's Expedition—St. Clair defeated—General Wayne victorious and makes a Treaty with them—Second Session of Congress—Fiscal Arrangements of the Secretary of the Treasury—Indisposition of the President—He visits Mount Vernon—Meets Congress at Philadelphia—His Tour to the Southern States—Second Congress—The President refuses his signature to the Representative Bill—Contemplates retiring to Private Life—Consents to be a Candidate for the Second Presidency.

1789. In adjusting the ceremonies of the inauguration of the President, Congress determined that the oath of office should be administered to him in an open gallery adjoining the Hall of the Senate. Accordingly on the 30th of April, General WASHINGTON attended, and, in a view of a vast assemblage of people, was constitutionally qualified for the administration of the government. On his being proclaimed President of the United States, reiterated acclamations testified the interest and the pleasure which the attending multitude felt in the transaction.

The President immediately entered the Senate chamber and made the following Speech to the two branches of the Legislature.

"FELLOW CITIZENS OF THE SENATE, AND
OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

"Among the vicissitudes incident to life, no event could have filled me with greater anxieties than that of which the notification was transmitted by your order, and received on the 14th day of the present month. On the one hand, I was summoned by my country, whose voice I can never hear but with veneration and

love, from a retreat which I had chosen with the fondest predilection, and, in my flattering hopes, with an immutable decision as the asylum of my declining years : a retreat which was rendered every day more necessary as well as more dear to me, by the addition of habit to inclination, and of frequent interruptions in my health to the gradual waste committed on it by time. On the other hand, the magnitude and difficulty of the trust to which the voice of my country called me, being sufficient to awaken in the wisest and most experienced of her citizens, a distrustful scrutiny into his qualifications, could not but overwhelm with despondence one, who, inheriting inferior endowments from nature, and unpractised in the duties of civil administration, ought to be peculiarly conscious of his own deficiencies. In this conflict of emotions, all I dare aver is, that it has been my faithful study to collect my duty from a just appreciation of every circumstance by which it might be affected. All I dare hope is, that if in accepting this task I have been too much swayed by a grateful remembrance of former instances, or by an affectionate sensibility to this transcendent proof of the confidence of my fellow citizens ; and have thence too little consulted my incapacity as well as disinclination for the weighty and untried cares before me ; my error will be palliated by the motives which misled me, and its consequences be judged by my country, with some share of the partiality in which they originated.

“ Such being the impressions under which I have, in obedience to the publick summons, repaired to the present station, it would be peculiarly improper to omit in this first official act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being, who rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations, and whose providential aids can supply every human defect, that his benediction may consecrate to the liberties and happiness of the people of the United States, a govern-

ment instituted by themselves for these essential purposes; and may enable every instrument employed in its administration, to execute with success the functions allotted to his charge. In tendering this homage to the great Author of every publick and private good, I assure myself that it expresses your sentiments not less than my own; nor those of my fellow citizens at large, less than either. No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the invisible hand, which conducts the affairs of men, more than the people of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation, seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency. And in the important revolution just accomplished in the system of their united government, the tranquil deliberations and voluntary consent of so many distinct communities, from which the event has resulted, cannot be compared with the means by which most governments have been established, without some return of pious gratitude along with a humble anticipation of the future blessings which the past seem to presage. These reflections, arising out of the present crisis, have forced themselves too strongly on my mind to be suppressed. You will join with me, I trust, in thinking that there are none under the influence of which, the proceedings of a new and free government can more auspiciously commence.

“By the article establishing the executive department, it is made the duty of the President ‘to recommend to your consideration, such measures as he shall judge necessary and expedient.’ The circumstances under which I now meet you, will acquit me from entering into that subject, farther than to refer you to the great Constitutional Charter under which we are assembled; and which in defining your powers, designates the objects to which your attention is to be given. It will be more consistent with those circumstances, and far more congenial with the feelings which actu-

me to substitute in place of a recommendation of particular measures, the tribute that is due to the talents, the rectitude, and the patriotism which adorn the characters selected to devise and adopt them. In these honourable qualifications, I behold the surest pledges, that as on one side, no local prejudices or attachments, no separate views nor party animosities, will misdirect the comprehensive and equal eye which ought to watch over this great assemblage of communities and interests: so, on another, that the foundations of our national policy will be laid in the pure and immutable principles of private morality; and the pre-eminence of a free government be exemplified by all the attributes which can win the affections of its citizens, and command the respect of the world.

"I dwell on this prospect with every satisfaction which an ardent love for my country can inspire; since there is no truth more thoroughly established, than that there exists in the economy and course of nature, an indissoluble union between virtue and happiness—between duty and advantage—between the genuine maxims of an honest and magnanimous policy, and the solid rewards of publick prosperity and felicity. Since we ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right, which Heaven itself has ordained: and since the preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered as *deeply*, perhaps as *finally* staked, on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people.

"Besides the ordinary objects submitted to your care, it will remain with your judgment to decide how far an exercise of the occasional power delegated by the fifth article of the Constitution is rendered expedient at the present juncture, by the nature of objections which have been urged against the system, or by

the degree of inquietude which has given birth to them. Instead of undertaking particular recommendations on this subject, in which I could be guided by no lights derived from official opportunities, I shall again give way to my entire confidence in your discernment and pursuit of the publick good ; for I assure myself, that whilst you carefully avoid every alteration which might endanger the benefits of an united and effective government, or which ought to await the future lessons of experience ; a reverence for the characteristic rights of freemen, and a regard for the publick harmony, will sufficiently influence your deliberations on the question, how far the former can be more impreguably fortified, or the latter be safely and advantageously promoted.

“ To the preceding observations I have one to add, which will be most properly addressed to the House of Representatives. It concerns myself, and will therefore be as brief as possible. When I was first honoured with a call into the service of my country, then on the eve of an arduous struggle for its liberties, the light in which I contemplated my duty, required that I should renounce every pecuniary compensation. From this resolution I have in no instance departed. And being still under the impressions which produced it, I must decline as inapplicable to myself, any share in the personal emoluments, which may be indispensably included in a permanent provision for the executive department ; and must accordingly pray that the pecuniary estimates for the station in which I am placed, may, during my continuation in it, be limited to such actual expenditures as the publick good may be thought to require.

“ Having thus imparted to you my sentiments, as they have been awakened by the occasion which brings us together, I shall take my present leave ; but not without resorting once more to the benign Parent of the human race, in humble supplication, that since the

has been pleased to favour the American people with opportunities for deliberating in perfect tranquillity, and dispositions for deciding with unparalleled unanimity on a form of government for the security of their union, and the advancement of their happiness; so his divine blessing may be equally conspicuous in the enlarged views, the temperate consultations, and the wise measures on which the success of this government must depend."

The answer of the Senate was highly respectful and affectionate.

"The unanimous suffrage of the elective body in your favour, is peculiarly expressive of the gratitude, confidence, and affection of the citizens of America, and is the highest testimonial at once of your merit, and their esteem. We are sensible, Sir, that nothing but the voice of your fellow citizens could have called you from a retreat; chosen by the fondest predilection, endeared by habit, and consecrated to the repose of declining years. We rejoice, and with us, all America, that, in obedience to the call of our common country, you have returned once more to publick life. In you all parties confide, in you all interests unite, and we have no doubt that your past services, great as they have been, will be equalled by your future exertions; and that your prudence and sagacity, as a statesman, will tend to avert the dangers to which we were exposed, to give stability to the present government, and dignity and splendour to that country, which your skill and valour as a soldier, so eminently contributed to raise to independence and empire.

"When we contemplate the coincidence of circumstances, and wonderful combination of causes which gradually prepared the people of this country for independence; when we contemplate the rise, progress, and termination of the late war, which gave them a name among the nations of the earth, we are, with you, unavoidably led to acknowledge and adore the

great Arbitrator of the universe, by whom empires rise and fall. A review of the many signal instances of divine interposition in favour of this country, claims our most pious gratitude. And permit us, Sir, to observe, that among the great events which have led to the formation and establishment of a federal government, we esteem your acceptance of the office of President, as one of the most propitious and important."

The House, equally affectionate and respectful in their answer, say :

"The Representatives of the People of the United States, present their congratulations on the event by which your fellow citizens have attested the pre-eminence of your merit. You have long held the first place in their esteem ; you have often received tokens of their affection ; you now possess the only proof that remained of their gratitude for your services, of their reverence for your wisdom, and of their confidence in your virtues. You enjoy the highest, because the truest honour, of being the First Magistrate, by the unanimous choice of the freest people on the face of the earth.

"We well know the anxieties with which you must have obeyed the summons, from the repose reserved for your declining years, into publick scenes, of which you had taken your leave for ever ; but the obedience was due to the occasion. It is already applauded by the universal joy which welcomes you to your station, and we cannot doubt that it will be rewarded with all the satisfaction, with which an ardent love for your fellow citizens must review successful efforts to promote their happiness.

"This anticipation is not justified merely by the past experience of your signal services. It is particularly suggested by the pious impressions under which you commence your administration, and the enlightened maxims by which you mean to conduct it. We feel with you the strongest obligations to adore the in-

visible hand which has led the American people through so many difficulties, to cherish a conscious responsibility for the destiny of republican liberty, and to seek the only sure means of preserving and recommending the precious deposit in a system of legislation, founded on the principles of an honest policy, and directed by the spirit of a diffusive patriotism.

“The question arising out of the fifth article of the Constitution will receive all the attention demanded by its importance, and will, we trust, be decided under the influence of all the considerations to which you allude.

“In forming the pecuniary provisions for the executive department, we shall not lose sight of a wish resulting from motives which give it a peculiar claim to our regard. Your resolution, in a moment critical to the liberties of your country, to renounce all personal emolument, was among the many presages of your patriotick services, which have been amply fulfilled; and your scrupulous adherence now to the law then imposed on yourself, cannot fail to demonstrate the purity, whilst it increases the lustre of a character, which has so many titles to admiration.

“Such are the sentiments with which we have thought fit to address you. They flow from our own hearts, and we verily believe, that among the millions we represent, there is not a virtuous citizen whose heart will disown them.

“All that remains is, that we join in your fervent supplications for the blessings of Heaven on our country; and that we add our own for the choicest of those blessings on the most beloved of her citizens.”

While waiting the movements of the Legislature, the President endeavoured fully to acquaint himself with the state of publick affairs, and for this purpose, he called upon those who had been the heads of departments under the confederation, to report to him the situation of their respective concerns. He also, hav-

ing consulted with his friends, adopted a system for the order of his own household, for the regulation of his hours of business, and of intercourse with those who, in a formal manner, visited him as the Supreme Magistrate of the nation.

He publicly announced that neither visits of business nor ceremony would be expected on Sunday, as he wished to reserve this day sacredly to himself. Other regulations, adopted at this time, were at a subsequent period complained of as partaking too much of monarchical customs. To a friend in Virginia, who had made known these complaints, the President gave the following reasons for their adoption.

“ While the eyes of America, perhaps of the world, are turned to this government, and many are watching the movements of those who are concerned in its administration, I should like to be informed through so good a medium, of the publick opinion of both men and measures, and of none more than myself;—not so much of what may be thought commendable parts, if any, of my conduct, as of those which are conceived to be of a different complexion. The man who means to commit no wrong, will never be guilty of enormities, consequently can never be unwilling to learn what are ascribed to him as foibles. If they are really such, the knowledge of them, in a well disposed mind, will go half way towards a reform. If they are not errors, he can explain and justify the motives of his actions. At a distance from the theatre of action, truth is not always related without embellishments, and sometimes is entirely perverted, from a misconception of the causes which produced the effects that are the subject of censure.

“ This leads me to think that a system which I found it indispensably necessary to adopt upon my first coming to this city, might have undergone severe strictures, and have had motives, very foreign from those that governed me, assigned as the causes thereof—I

mean first, returning no visits; second, appointing certain days to receive them generally, (not to the exclusion, however, of visits on any other days under particular circumstances) and third, at first entertaining no company, and afterwards (until I was unable to entertain any at all) confining it to official characters. A few days evinced the necessity of the two first in so clear a point of view, that had I not adopted it, I should have been unable to have attended to any sort of business, unless I had applied the hours allotted to rest and refreshment to this purpose; for by the time I had done breakfast, and thence until dinner, and afterwards until bed time, I could not get relieved from the ceremony of one visit, before I had to attend to another. In a word, I had no leisure to read or to answer the despatches that were pouring in upon me from all quarters.

“Before the custom was established, which now accommodates foreign characters, strangers, and others, who, from motives of curiosity, respect to the Chief Magistrate, or any other cause, are induced to call upon me, I was unable to attend to any business whatsoever. For gentlemen, consulting their own convenience rather than mine, were calling from the time I rose from breakfast, often before, until I sat down to dinner. This, as I resolved not to neglect my publick duties, reduced me to the choice of one of these alternatives; either to refuse them *altogether*, or to appropriate a time for the reception of them. The first would, I well knew, be disgusting to many; the latter, I expected, would undergo animadversions from those who would find fault with or without cause. To please every body was impossible. I therefore adopted that line of conduct which combined publick advantage with private convenience, and which in my judgment was unexceptionable in itself.

“These visits are optional. They are made without invitation. Between the hours of three and four

every Tuesday I am prepared to receive them. Gentlemen, often in great numbers, come and go, chat with each other, and act as they please. A porter shows them into the room, and they retire from it when they choose, and without ceremony. At their first entrance, they salute me, and I them, and as many as I can talk to, I do. What pomp there is in all this, I am unable to discover. Perhaps it consists in not sitting: to this, two reasons are opposed; first, it is unusual; secondly, (which is a more substantial one) because I have no room large enough to contain a third of the chairs which would be sufficient to admit it. If it is supposed that ostentation, or the fashions of courts, (which, by the bye, I believe originate often in convenience, not to say necessity, than is generally imagined) gave rise to this custom, I will boldly affirm that *no* supposition was ever more erroneous; for were I to indulge my inclinations, every moment that I could withdraw from the fatigues of my station, should be spent in retirement. That they are not, proceeds from the sense I entertain of the propriety of giving to every one as free access as consists with that respect which is due to the chair of government; and that respect, I conceive, is neither to be acquired or preserved but by maintaining a just medium between much state, and too great familiarity.

“ Similar to the above, but of a more familiar and sociable kind, are the visits of every Friday afternoon to Mrs. Washington, where I always am. These public meetings, and a dinner once a week to as many as my table will hold, with the references to and from the different departments of state, and other communications with all parts of the union, is as much, if not more, than I am able to undergo; for I have already had, within less than a year, two severe attacks;—the last worse than the first:—a third, it is more than probable, will put me to sleep with my fathers—at what distance this may be, I know not.”

At the commencement of the Presidency of General WASHINGTON, a variety of circumstances combined to create anxiety and apprehension respecting the operations of the government.

The relation of the country with foreign powers was critical and embarrassing. Spain discovered jealousies of the American people, and manifested a disposition to check their progress to national wealth and strength. She had refused negotiation with the American government, and denied to its subjects the navigation of the Mississippi south of the boundary of the United States.

Between Great Britain and the United States, great causes of altercation existed. Just complaints of the non-execution of essential articles of the treaty of peace were mutually made, and an irritable state of mind appeared in both nations, which rendered the adjustment of the controversy the more difficult.

France early discovered a disposition to take advantage of the partiality of the American people, to gain an influence in their councils, and to acquire the control of their destiny.

The Indians, through the whole extent of the western frontier, manifested great inquietude. Their jealousies of the United States were supposed to have been excited by the intrigues of Spanish and British partisans, and most of the tribes assumed a very threatening attitude.

In addition to these foreign difficulties, there were considerations of a domestick nature, peculiarly calculated to excite apprehension.

The whole plan of the Federal Government was new. In no branch of it was there a precedent; but first principles and general rules were to be established in every department. The United States were without funds or revenue, and were destitute of publick credit.

Many distinguished characters, in different parts of

the Union, were from the first opposed to the Federal Constitution. Debates in state Conventions on its principles, had enkindled no inconsiderable degree of animosity. It had been ratified in them generally by small majorities, and in some instances this majority had been obtained, by annexing provisional amendments to the ratification. It was therefore to be apprehended that many of the members of the Legislature were hostile to the Constitution, and would, under the idea of amending, sacrifice its spirit, or by their opposition to every salutary measure, prevent an experiment of a republican form of Government, auspiciously begun, from being fairly completed.

Happily the American people retained their confidence in those distinguished statesmen, who had been their leaders in the controversy with Great Britain, which terminated in National Independence; and these statesmen, imitating at this crisis the publick spirit of the General of the revolutionary war, consented to forego the pleasures and emoluments of private life, for the service of their country. Many of them were the successful candidates for popular suffrage to compose the Legislature of the nation, and the first Congress consisted of men eminent for their talents and political information, and venerable for their patriotism and virtue. A decided majority of these were the friends of the Constitution, and were disposed to make every exertion to carry it into execution upon a liberal and efficient plan.

One of the first acts of the Legislature was to establish those departments which were necessary to aid the Executive in the administration of the government.

In filling these departments, the President was to perform an important and delicate duty. Applications for office had been numerous, and the following extract of a letter written to a friend, who had applied even before General WASHINGTON accepted the Presi-

dency, will show the disposition with which he executed this trust.

"Should it become absolutely necessary for me to occupy the station in which your letter presupposes me, I have determined to go into it, perfectly free from all engagements of every nature whatsoever. A conduct in conformity to this resolution, would enable me in balancing the various pretensions of different candidates for appointments, to act with a sole reference to justice and the publick good. This is, in substance, the answer that I have given to all applications (and they are not few) which have already been made. Among the places sought after in these applications, I must not conceal that the office to which you particularly allude, is comprehended. This fact, I tell you merely as a matter of information. My general manner of thinking, as to the propriety of holding myself totally disengaged, will apologize for my not enlarging further on the subject.

"Though I am sensible that the publick suffrage which places a man in office, should prevent him from being swayed, in the execution of it, by his private inclinations, yet he may assuredly, without violating his duty, be indulged in the continuance of his former attachments."

His consequent nominations fully proved the purity of these declarations, and attested that his selection of characters, for the respective offices to be filled, was made with great judgment and prudence. Removed from the influence of local and family considerations, he directed his attention to the publick interest. Where qualifications were equal, the candidate who could claim the merit of publick service, had the preference in his appointment.

His cabinet was composed of Mr. Jefferson, Secretary of State, Colonel Hamilton, Secretary of the Treasury, General Knox, Secretary of War, and Mr. Edmund Randolph, Attorney General.

The session of Congress continued to September: perfect harmony subsisted through this period between the Executive and the Legislature, and no circumstance threatened to interrupt it.

At the adjournment of Congress, the President made preparations for a tour through New-England, to view the improvements of the country and to judge of the disposition of the people towards the newly established government. Accordingly, on the 15th of October, he began his journey; and, passing through Connecticut and Massachusetts went as far as Portsmouth in New-Hampshire; returning by a different route, he arrived on the 13th of November at New-York.

Many circumstances were combined during this visit to excite his sensibility and to render it grateful to his best feelings. His journey carried him through the most populous and cultivated part of the United States, and gave him a favourable opportunity to notice the progress of the country in those improvements, which constitute the strength, the wealth, and ornament of society. He visited the scene of his first campaign, and must have experienced elevated reflections in contrasting the present situation of himself and his country, with his and their condition at the commencement of the revolutionary war. Every where he remarked a steady attachment to the Federal Government, and received the most grateful evidence of unqualified approbation of the measures of the Administration. In every place through which he passed, business was suspended, and all classes of citizens were eagerly employed to obtain a sight of the Father of their country, and to join in the common expressions of veneration and attachment. Military parade, processions, and triumphal arches, awaited him in those populous towns at which he stopped, and so fully was the publick curiosity engrossed by his journey, that the newspapers of the day were filled with narratives of its progress and termination.

At Cambridge, the Lieutenant Governour and Council of Massachusetts waited upon him and accompanied him to Boston, escorted by a numerous collection of citizens, under the direction of the Marshal of the District, and the Sheriff of Suffolk. The Selectmen received him at the entrance of the town, and from it a procession of the inhabitants was formed, which extended to the State House ; an interesting part of this procession, and which engaged the special attention of the President, was the male children of the town, under their respective literary instructors. This procession opened to the right and left, and he on horseback, preceded by companies of artillery and infantry, by the Lieutenant Governour and council, the Marshall and Sheriff, passed to the State House. Here a triumphal arch was erected from the State House across Cornhill to the opposite houses. On the top of the arch was a gallery, in which were placed a select choir of singers of both sexes. In the middle of the gallery a pyramid was erected. On one side of this over the arch, was the inscription, "TO THE MAN WHO UNITES ALL HEARTS," and on the opposite side "TO COLUMBIA'S FAVOURITE SON."

At the end of the arch next the State House, on a large ground, was this inscription, "BOSTON RELIEVED MARCH 17, 1776." The President was introduced through the State House to a handsome gallery at the west end of that building, erected near the arch on seven pillars. As soon as he appeared in view, loud acclamations broke from the concourse below. He bowed to them, on which the choir sang an appropriate Ode. He was then conducted to a house provided for his use, and elegantly furnished from the families of individual gentlemen.

Addresses were presented to him from civil, literary, and religious corporations, and from all other societies of any distinction. In these, grateful notice was taken

of his publick services, and particularly, of the sacrifice he made of private happiness in accepting the Presidency.

In his answers, the President reciprocated the benevolent wishes of his countrymen, in language calculated to confirm their confidence and affection. He thus replied to a respectful address from the inhabitants of Boston.

"I rejoice with you my fellow citizens, in every circumstance that declares your prosperity; and I do so most cordially because you have well deserved to be happy.

"Your love of liberty, your respect for the laws, your habits of industry, and your practice of the moral and religious obligations, are the strongest claims to national and individual happiness. And they will, I trust, be firmly and lastingly established."

In the renewal of direct intercourse between General WASHINGTON and the companions of his toils and glory in the tented field, we perceive the most interesting effusion of the refined feelings of the human heart.

"Amidst the various gratulations," says the society of Cincinnati of Massachusetts, "which your arrival in this metropolis has occasioned, permit us, the members of the society of the Cincinnati in this Commonwealth, most respectfully to assure you of the ardour of esteem and affection you have so indelibly fixed in our hearts, as our glorious leader in war, and illustrious example in peace.

"After the solemn and endearing farewell on the banks of the Hudson, which our anxiety presaged as final, most peculiarly pleasing is the present unexpected meeting. On this occasion we cannot avoid the recollection of the various scenes of toil and danger through which you conducted us, and while we contemplate various trying periods of the war, and the triumphs of peace, we rejoice to behold you, induced

by the unanimous voice of your country, entering upon other trials, and other services, alike important, and in some points of view, equally hazardous. For the completion of the great purposes which a grateful country has assigned you, long, very long may your invaluable life be preserved. And as the admiring world, while considering you as a soldier, have long wanted a comparison, may your virtues and talents as a statesman leave them without a parallel.

"It is not in words to express an attachment founded like ours. We can only say, that when soldiers, our greatest pride was a promptitude of obedience to your orders; as citizens, our supreme ambition is to maintain the character of firm supporters of that noble fabrick of Federal Government over which you preside.

"As members of the society of the Cincinnati, it will be our endeavour to cherish those sacred principles of charity and paternal attachment which our institution inculcates. And while our conduct is thus regulated, we can never want the patronage of the first of patriots and the best of men."

To which the President thus replied.

"In reciprocating with gratitude and sincerity, the multiplied and affecting gratulations of my fellow citizens of this Commonwealth, they will all of them with justice allow me to say, that none can be dearer to me than the affectionate assurances which you have expressed. Dear indeed is the occasion which restores an intercourse with my faithful associates in prosperous and adverse fortune; and enhanced are the triumphs of peace participated with those whose virtue and valour so largely contributed to procure them. To that virtue and valour, your country has confessed her obligations. Be mine the grateful task to add the testimony of a connexion which it was my pride to own in the field, and is now my happiness to acknowledge in the enjoyments of peace and freedom.

"Regulating your conduct by those principles which have heretofore governed your actions as men, soldiers, and citizens, you will repeat the obligations conferred on your country, and you will transmit to posterity an example that must command their admiration and grateful praise. Long may you continue to enjoy the endearments of paternal attachment and the heartfelt happiness of reflecting that you have faithfully done your duty.

"While I am permitted to possess the consciousness of this worth, which has long bound me to you by every tie of affection and esteem, I will continue to be your sincere and faithful friend."

The first diplomatick transaction of the President was with the Indian tribes. He conceived it to be true policy to "cultivate an intimate intercourse with the Indians upon principles calculated to advance their happiness, and to attach them firmly to the United States."

With these views he early opened negotiations with them, and the interests of several of the states being closely connected with treaties that might be made, he asked, during the first session of Congress, the advice of the Senate upon questions that were at issue.

The first attempt to establish a peace with the Creek Indians failed. M'Gillivray, their Chief, was the son of a white man, and his resentment had been keenly excited against the state of Georgia by the confiscation of lands which his father had holden; and more particularly by the claim of that government to a large tract on the Oconee in virtue of an Indian purchase, the validity of which the Creek nation denied. General Lincoln, Mr. Griffin, and Colonel Humphries were deputed Commissioners to negotiate with the Creeks in the summer of 1789. They met M'Gillivray with other Chiefs, and about two thousand of the tribe at Rock landing, on the Oconee, on the frontiers of Georgia. Although first appearances promised

success to the mission, yet M'Gillivray suddenly broke off the negotiation for the ostensible reason of a dispute about boundaries, but really, as was supposed, through the influence of the Spanish government.

The situation of the United States in their relation with the Indians became more and more critical and embarrassing, and war was threatened with all the tribes from Canada to Louisiana. The danger was the more formidable from the supposition that the jealousies of the Indians were excited by the intrigues of British and Spanish agents, and that an Indian war would probably lead to hostilities with those powers.

Ardently desirous to secure the frontiers from the horrors of Indian warfare, the President again attempted to negotiate with the Creeks, without committing the dignity of government. He sent Colo-Willett, a gallant revolutionary officer, into their country, apparently upon private business; but furnished with credentials, to be used if he found M'Gillivray disposed for peace. This second mission proved successful. M'Gillivray and a number of Creek Chiefs were induced to repair to New-York, where negotiations were immediately opened, and a treaty soon established; although the Secretary of East Florida came to New-York with a large sum of money, under a pretence of purchasing flour, but in fact to prevent M'Gillivray from treating.

The attempt to establish peace with the Indians of the Wabash and the Miamis did not terminate so successfully. The American settlers on that frontier continued to suffer from their hostilities, and all appearances indicated, that they could be brought into a pacifick disposition, only by being made themselves to feel the miseries of war.

The President was decidedly of the opinion that on the failure of negotiation, a military force should be employed in their country, which their united power would not successfully resist, and which should be ade-

quate to the conquest of their towns, and the destruction of their villages. This, he conceived, policy, economy, and humanity dictated. But Congress, in their military establishment, did not meet his views, and at the moment he gave his sanction to the bill, he entered in his private journal, that he did not conceive the military establishment was adequate to the exigence of the government, and to the protection it was intended to afford.

For the sake of a connected view of Indian affairs, we will in this place give a narrative of subsequent transactions, although we shall be carried out of the order of time in which events took place.

The attempt to negotiate with the Indians northwest of the Ohio having proved abortive, the President conceived himself bound to use the means Congress had put into his hands to protect the frontiers; and accordingly General Harmar was sent in September 1791, into the Indian territories with a force, consisting of about three hundred regular troops and eleven hundred militia of Pennsylvania and Kentucky, with orders to bring the Indians if possible to action, and to destroy their settlements on the waters of the Scioto and Wabash.

The Savages avoided an engagement with the main body of the American army, but with great spirit attacked a strong detachment which had pursued them, and killed several valuable officers. Harmar destroyed their settlements, but afforded no protection to the frontiers. Several smaller expeditions with various success were made into the Indian country, and in the autumn of 1791 Major General St. Clair marched a force of near two thousand effective men into their territories, and on the fourth of November was attacked and totally defeated by them.

The President, apprehending that the success of the Indians, and the booty they had gained, would have influence to bring other tribes into the war, conceived

that the honour of the nation was concerned to retrieve the American losses, and to afford protection to the frontiers. St. Clair resigning his commission, General Wayne was appointed his successor. The President lost no time in laying before Congress an estimate of such a military force, as he thought would be adequate to the object ; and they at length acceded to his proposal. While these preparations were ripening, much complaint was made of the war, and the President was induced, rather from a desire to convince the country that successful warfare was the only means of peace, than from any expectation of success in the mission, to send Colonel Harden and Major Trueman, two valuable officers and worthy men, into the Indian country, to attempt negotiation ; but they were both murdered. On the 20th of August, 1794, General Wayne brought the Indians to an engagement, totally defeated them, and destroyed their country on the Miamis.

This action was decisive : it deterred other tribes from entering into the war, and induced the Miamis themselves to treat for peace. On the 3d of August, a treaty was entered into by General Wayne with the Indians northwest of the Ohio, which ended all hostilities, quieted the fears of the frontiers, and gave universal satisfaction.

As early as 1789, the President received authentick intelligence, that Spanish agents were intriguing with the inhabitants of the Western country, to seduce them from their allegiance to the United States. Representations were made them in the name of the government of Spain, that while they were connected with the Atlantick States, the navigation of the Mississippi would be denied them ; but if they would assume an independent government, the river should be opened, and their independence supported.

In 1794, Spain, suffering herself the evils of war, was inclined to treat with the United States. She

intimated by her ministers, that the etiquette of her court forbid her to treat with Mr. Short, the American resident at Madrid, yet a higher diplomattick character would be accredited, and negotiations immediately opened with him. The President placed full confidence in Mr. Short, but he thought it policy to meet the friendly propositions of Spain, and in November nominated Mr. Pinckney to be the American Minister at that Court. In the course of the next summer, Mr. Pinckney repaired to Madrid, and on the 20th of October, 1795, a treaty was signed between him and the Spanish commissioners, which happily terminated the controversy respecting boundary lines, and the navigation of the Mississippi to the satisfaction of the nation. On the 8th of January, 1790, the President met Congress at their second session.

In his speech he congratulated them on the success of their measures, and recommended a variety of national objects to their serious attention. Among these, the following are the principal. Provision for national defence; the means of holding intercourse with foreign nations; establishing a rule of naturalization; uniformity in the currency, weights, and measures of the United States; and the promotion of science and literature.

"Knowledge," he observed, "is in every country the surest basis of publick happiness. In one, in which the measures of government receive their impressions so immediately from the sense of the community as in ours, it is proportionably essential." And he concluded with the following assurances.

"I shall derive great satisfaction in co-operating with you in the pleasing though arduous task of ensuring to our fellow citizens the blessings which they have a right to expect from a free, efficient, and equal government."

The answers of the Senate and the House of Representatives were cordial and respectful, and promised

a continuance of harmony between the Executive and Legislature.

In this session of Congress, the Secretary of the Treasury first reported those fiscal arrangements in support of publick credit, which, in their progress to establishment, were the occasion of warm and animated debates in the Legislature, fully displayed the discordance of political opinion among the members, and excited that party spirit which has since convulsed the United States.

The President readily gave his sanction to these fiscal establishments of the Legislature, yet by this act he seemed not to lose the good opinion of the opposition ; the blame and odium fell upon the Secretary of the Treasury, and upon the northern federal members of Congress.

The incessant application to business had a visible effect upon the constitution of the President, and at this period he was for a second time attacked with a violent disease, which put his life in imminent danger. At the close of the session, therefore, he determined to give himself a short relaxation in a visit to Mount Vernon. He first made a tour to Rhode-Island, which not being then in the Union, had not been included in his visit to New-England ; and at Newport and Providence he received every attention which affection and respect could dictate.

This retirement was of essential service to his health, and at the close of autumn he returned to Philadelphia to meet the Legislature ; to which place Congress had adjourned, at the close of the year 1790. At this time the President noticed the rising disturbances in Europe, and advised to those precautionary measures, which had a tendency to secure to the United States the benefit of their commerce. Mentioning to the House the sufficiency of the established revenue to the purposes to which it was appropriated, he expressed his hope " that it would be a favourite

policy with them not merely to secure the interest of the debt funded, but as far, and as fast as the growing resources of the country will permit, to exonerate it of the principal itself." The address was closed in the following impressive manner.

"In pursuing the various and weighty business of the present session, I indulge the fullest persuasion that your consultations will be marked with wisdom, and animated by the love of country. In whatever belongs to my duty, you shall have all the co-operation which an undiminished zeal for its welfare can inspire. It will be happy for us both, and our best reward, if by a successful administration of our respective trusts, we can make the established government more and more instrumental in promoting the good of our fellow citizens, and more and more the object of their attachment and confidence."

The respect and confidence of the Legislature in the Executive appeared on this occasion without diminution; although one of the measures of the President was for the first time condemned. A member from Georgia pronounced the treaty with the Creek Indians to be a violation of the rights of that state.

In this session of Congress the Bank of the United States was established. Its constitutionality had been deeply argued in the Legislative body, and came before the Executive as a question involving the highest national interest. It was reviewed in the Cabinet with the deliberation it merited. The Council, on this occasion, as on most others, were divided. Messrs. Jefferson and Randolph expressed as their decided opinion that the law was unconstitutional. Messrs. Hamilton and Knox were fully convinced of its constitutionality. The President called upon each member of his Council for the reasons of his opinion in writing. These he maturely weighed, and being convinced himself that the law was constitutional, put his signature to it.

With the 2d of March, 1791, terminated the period of the first Congress.

President WASHINGTON having made the necessary arrangements, and appointed an Executive Council to attend to the business of the government, soon after the close of the session, commenced a journey to the Southern States. On his way he stopped at the Potomack, and, pursuant to the powers with which Congress had vested him, marked out the site of the Federal City, designed as the permanent seat of government. In the course of this tour he received the same general expressions of love and veneration for his character, and of confidence in his government, which he had experienced in his northern circuit. And he derived great satisfaction in contemplating the improvements of the country, and remarking the evidences of attachment to the Federal Government. The feelings excited by this journey are fully expressed in the following letter, written after his return to Philadelphia.

"In my late tour through the Southern States, I experienced great satisfaction in seeing the good effects of the general government in that part of the union. The people at large have felt the security which it gives, and the equal justice which it administers to them. The Farmer, the Merchant, and the Mechanick, have seen their several interests attended to, and from thence they unite in placing a confidence in their Representatives, as well as in those in whose hands the execution of the laws is placed. Industry has there taken place of idleness, and economy of dissipation: Two or three years of good crops, and a ready market for the produce of their lands, have put every one in good humour; and in some instances, they even impate to the government what is due only to the goodness of Providence.

"The establishment of publick credit is an immense point gained in our national concerns. This I believe exceeds the expectation of the most sanguine among

the ; and a late instance, unparalleled in this country, has been given of the confidence reposed in our measures, by the rapidity with which the subscriptions to the Bank of the United States were filled. In two hours after the books were opened by the commissioners, the whole number of shares were taken up, and four thousand more applied for than were allowed by the institution. This circumstance was not only pleasing as it related to the confidence in government, but also as it exhibited an unexpected proof of the resources of our citizens."

The hearts of all Americans were with General WASHINGTON at this period ; but notwithstanding these publick appearances, there was in fact much hostility to the government at the Southward.

On the 24th of October, 1791, the President met the second Congress in the established form.

During this session a great national question came before the Legislature which the President was compelled ultimately to decide.

The constitution provides that there shall not be more than one Representative to thirty thousand inhabitants. An enumeration having been made, the House of Representatives passed a bill providing for each state to send one Representative for every thirty thousand of its population. This ratio in several instances leaving a large fraction, operated unequally on the small states. The Senate, to cure the evil, assumed a new principle of apportionment. They found the whole population of the United States, and, dividing this aggregate number by thirty thousand, took the quotient as the number of Representatives, and then apportioned this number upon the several states according to their population ; to which the House concurred. When the President had the bill before him for his signature, he took the opinion of his Cabinet upon the constitutionality of the arrangement. Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Randolph thought the bill unconstitutional.

General Knox was undecisive, and Colonel Hamilton conceived that the expression of the Constitution might be applied to the United States, or to the several states, and thought it best to coincide with the construction of the Legislature. After due deliberation, the President thought the bill unconstitutional, and not hesitating to do his duty, he returned it with the following objections.

“GENTLEMEN OF THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

“I have maturely considered the act, passed by the two Houses, entitled ‘an act for the apportionment of Representatives among the several states according to the first enumeration,’ and I return it to your House, wherein it originated, with the following objections.

“First, The Constitution has prescribed that Representatives shall be apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers, and there is no proportion or division which, applied to the respective numbers of the states, will yield the number and allotment of Representatives proposed by the bill.

“Secondly, The Constitution has also provided, that the number of Representatives shall not exceed one for thirty thousand, which restriction is by fair and obvious construction, to be applied to the separate and respective numbers of the states, and the bill has allotted to eight of the states more than one for thirty thousand.”

The adopted mode was in consequence of the dissent of the Executive laid aside, and, in a new bill, a Representative for every thirty-three thousand to each state was substituted.

The first Presidency of General WASHINGTON closed without other occurrences of great magnitude. The last session of the second Congress was violent and impassioned, and the members separated in a state of great irritation, but neither they nor their constituents had as yet impeached the motives of the President,

yet it was then evident that, if he remained at the head of government, his reputation must soon pass the ordeal of party conflict. He had determined to decline being a candidate for the Presidency at a second election, and to this purpose, had written a valedictory address to the American people; but the critical state of the country, and the urgent entreaties of his friends induced him to relinquish the determination.



CHAPTER XII.

General Washington re-elected President—State of Parties—Division in the Cabinet—The President endeavours to promote union—Influence of the French Revolution—Measures to secure the Neutrality of the United States in the War between France and England—Mr. Genet's illegal practices—He insults the Government—The Executive restricts him—He appeals to the People—They support the Administration—The President determines to arrest Genet—He is recalled—Negotiation with Britain—Insurrection in Pennsylvania—Democratick Societies—British Treaty—Communication between the French Executive and the Legislature of the United States—The President refuses to the House of Representatives the Papers respecting Diplomatick transactions—His interpositions in favour of the Marquis La Fayette—Takes the Son of the Marquis under his Protection and Patronage.

1793-7. WHEN the constitutional period arrived for the re-election of a President, it appeared, that General WASHINGTON had a second time the unanimous suffrage of his country for this exalted office. He entered upon its duties in the prospect, that the administration of the government would be attended with accumulated difficulty.

The character of the American patriot is with reluctance blended in these pages with events of a local or temporary nature. It is painful to reflect, that his fair fame was even for a moment sullied by the foul breath of calumny. The pen is indignant to record charges against his honour and his patriotism, charges which their authors knew to be unfounded and which were

made only to answer the purposes of a party. But it is impossible to portray the wisdom, the firmness, and prudence which were displayed during his second Presidency, or to show the good fortune which attended it, without bringing into distinct view the circumstances under which he acted. Without a knowledge of the difficulties which he surmounted, and the opposition which he conquered, posterity will have no adequate conception of the merits of this period of his administration.

The difference of political opinion arising from pursuits of personal ambition, from discordant views of national and state policy, and from the danger to be apprehended from the encroachments of democracy, or from the abuse of power in the constituted government, had, since the establishment of the Federal Constitution regularly increased in strength and asperity. It had appeared in all the important debates of Congress, had pervaded every part of the United States, and under its influence, two political parties were by this time fully established, and nearly balanced; the one the warm advocates, the other the determined opponents of the measures of the government.

Although the President had readily given his sanction to those acts of the government which had agitated in the highest degree the passions of parties, yet there was that in his character which forbade his political enemies to denominate him the head of a party. He had strong hold of the affections and confidence of the great mass of his countrymen, and the most daring of the oppositionists thought it as yet impolitic to assail his patriotism; but a crisis was evidently approaching, when he would be under the necessity of putting his personal influence to hazard, of subjecting himself to the obloquy of a virulent party, and of sustaining the assault of disappointed ambition.

Unfortunately the spirit of political controversy and division which agitated the nation, entered the Cabi-

net of the Executive, and discovered itself in almost every important subject that was submitted to their discussion. Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Hamilton were directly opposed to each other on almost all important national questions. This opposition being frequently warmed by the collision of debate, finally settled into implacable political and personal animosity. The President noticed this hostility between his counsellors with grief and mortification; and unwilling to part with either, he endeavoured to reconcile them. In a letter addressed to the Secretary of State in August 1792, after stating the critical situation of the United States, with respect to foreign nations, he thus feelingly touched upon the animosity that existed in the Cabinet.

“How unfortunate, how much to be regretted then, that while we are encompassed on all sides with avowed enemies, and insidious friends, internal dissensions should be harrowing and tearing our vitals. The last, to me, is the most serious, the most alarming, and the most afflicting of the two; and without more charity for the opinions of one another in government matters, or some more infallible criterion by which the truth of speculative opinions, before they have undergone the test of experience, are to be forejudged than has yet fallen to the lot of fallibility, I believe it will be difficult if not impracticable to manage the reins of government, or keep the parts of it together; for if, instead of laying our shoulders to the machine, after measures are decided on, one pulls this way, and another that, before the utility of the thing is fairly tried, it must inevitably be torn asunder; and in my opinion, the fairest prospect of happiness and prosperity that ever was presented to man, will be lost, perhaps for ever.

“My earnest wish and fondest hope therefore is, that instead of wounding suspicions, and irritating charges, there may be liberal allowances, mutual for-

bearances, and temporizing yielding on all sides. Under the exercise of these, matters will go on smoothly, and if possible, more prosperously. Without them, every thing must rub ; the wheels of government will clog ; our enemies will triumph ; and by throwing their weight into the disaffected scale, may accomplish the ruin of the goodly fabrick we have been erecting.

“ I do not mean to apply this advice, or these observations, to any particular person or character. I have given them in the same general terms to other officers of the government, because the disagreements which have arisen from difference of opinions, and the attacks which have been made upon almost all the measures of government, and most of its executive officers, have for a long time past filled me with painful sensations, and cannot fail, I think, of producing unhappy consequences, at home and abroad.”

To a letter of Mr. Jefferson's, in which he endeavoured to prove, that although he wished to amend, yet he had advocated the adoption of the Federal Constitution, the President thus replied.

“ I did not require the evidence of the extracts which you enclosed me, to convince me of your attachment to the constitution of the United States, or of your disposition to promote the general welfare of this country ; but I regret, deeply regret, the difference of opinion which has arisen, and divided you and another principal officer of the government ; and wish devoutly there could be an accommodation of them by mutual yieldings.

“ A measure of this sort would produce harmony and consequent good in our publick Councils ; and the contrary will inevitably produce confusion and serious mischiefs ; and for what ? Because mankind cannot see alike, but would adopt different means to obtain the same end. For I will frankly and solemnly declare, that I believe the views of both to be pure

and well meant, and that experience only will decide with respect to the salubrity of the measures which are the subject of this dispute. Why then, when some of the best citizens of the United States, men of discernment, uniform and tried patriots, who have no sinister views to promote, but are chaste in their ways of thinking and acting, are to be found, some on one side, and some on the other of the questions which have caused these agitations ; why should either of you be so tenacious of your opinions as to make no allowance for those of the other ?

“ I could, and indeed was about to add more on this interesting subject, but will forbear at least for the present, after expressing a wish that the cup which has been presented to us may not be snatched from our lips by a discordance of action, when I am persuaded that there is no discordance in your views. I have a great and sincere esteem for you both ; and ardently wish that some line could be marked out, by which both of you could walk.”

These serious endeavours of the President produced not their desired effect. The hostility of the two Secretaries remained in full force. The Attorney General almost without exception coincided in opinion with Mr. Jefferson ; the Secretary of War generally accorded in judgment with Colonel Hamilton, and of consequence the President was deprived of the proper advice of his Council. But he possessed in a degree which few other men ever did, the faculty to suspend his own judgment on every important subject, until he had exhausted every source of information, and had fully weighed the opinions of those about him. He early established it as a maxim never to give his opinion on any important question, until the moment that a decision was necessary, and from a rigid adherence to this maxim, on many critical occasions he derived singular advantage. In deliberating upon national subjects submitted to him as the Supreme Executive,

he appeared to be raised above the influence of passions, prejudice, and every personal and local consideration; and having given every circumstance its weight, to decide from the dictates of pure intelligence.

This was the political situation of the United States, when the French revolution had made such progress as to acquire an influence over the feelings and the sentiments of the American people, and to render the diplomatick concerns of the government with that country critical and embarrassing.

Mr. Morris, the American Minister at Paris, with much discrimination noticed the surprising events that were daily taking place in France, and transmitted a minute account of them to the President; but while waiting for instructions, he cautiously avoided committing the government of his own country.

On the deposition of the Monarch, with all the bloody and ferocious deeds which accompanied it, the President gave Mr. Morris the following information for the direction of his ministerial conduct. The existing administration in France was to be acknowledged; as every nation possesses an inherent right to settle the frame of its own government, and to manage its internal concerns; that the United States would punctually pay the debt due to France, and would furnish any supplies to St. Domingo that the parent country might desire. Mr. Morris was directed to assure France of the friendly disposition of the United States, and that every opportunity would be embraced to promote her welfare.

Attached to republican principles, the President fondly hoped that the struggle in France would terminate in a free government; but his partiality towards the new order of things in that country, was not so great as to render him forgetful that the aid given to America was afforded by the fallen king, or unmindful that he was the head of his own nation, whose inde-

pendence and prosperity he ought to hold in higher estimation than the interest of a foreign people.

The prejudices and partialities of the American people towards England and France, excited by the revolutionary contest, had not at this period wholly subsided, and the commencement of war between *regenerated* France and the Monarchs of Europe, operated upon their feelings like a shock of electricity. Reason and judgment seemed to be laid aside, and nothing was heard but the language of passion. Without inquiring which nation was the first aggressor, Americans could only see a number of despots combined against a sister Republick, virtuously struggling to establish her liberty. Their national vanity was flattered by the persuasion that the spark which lighted the flame of liberty in France, was taken from their altar, or, in the language of Dr. Franklin, "the French having served an apprenticeship in America, set up for themselves in Europe."

If a few individuals, more cool, doubted the tendency, and dreaded the issue of the commotions in France, they were generally denominated aristocrats, the enemies of equal liberty, and the enemies of their own country.

Although there was no intention in the body of American citizens to involve the United States in a war, yet they generally discovered an ardent inclination to grant those favours to France, which must inevitably lead to a state of hostility.

The President was at Mount Vernon on some urgent private business, when the intelligence of the declaration of war between France and England reached the United States. Perceiving the importance of the crisis, he with haste returned to the seat of government. On the day which succeeded that of his arrival, April 17, 1793, he addressed the following letter to the members of his Cabinet, for their solemn deliberations.

"The posture of affairs in Europe, particularly be-

tween France and Great Britain, places the United States in a delicate situation, and requires much consideration of the measures which will be proper for them to observe in the war between those powers. With a view to forming a general plan of conduct for the Executive, I have stated and enclosed sundry questions to be considered, preparatory to a meeting at my house to-morrow, where I shall expect to see you at 9 o'clock, and to receive the result of your reflections thereon.

“ Question I. Shall a proclamation issue for the purpose of preventing interferences of the citizens of the United States in the war between France and Great Britain, &c.? Shall it contain a declaration of neutrality or not? What shall it contain?

“ Question II. Shall a minister from the Republic of France be received?

“ Question III. If received, shall it be absolutely, or with qualifications, and if with qualifications, of what kind?

“ Question IV. Are the United States obliged by good faith to consider the treaties heretofore made with France, as applying to the present situation of the parties? May they either renounce them or hold them suspended until the government of France shall be *established*?

“ Question V. If they have the right, is it expedient to do either? And which?

“ Question VI. If they have an option, would it be a breach of neutrality to consider the treaty still in operation?

“ Question VII. If the treaties are to be considered as now in operation, is the guarantee in the treaty of alliance applicable to a defensive war only, or to war either offensive or defensive?

“ Question VIII. Does the war in which France is engaged appear to be offensive or defensive on her part? Or of a mixed and equivocal character?

“ Question IX. If of a mixed and equivocal character, does the guarantee in any event apply to such a war ?

“ Question X. What is the effect of a guarantee, such as that to be found in the treaty of alliance between the United States and France ?

“ Question XI. Does any article in either of the treaties prevent ships of war, other than privateers, of the powers opposed to France, from coming into the ports of the United States, to act as convoys to their own merchantmen ? Or does it lay any other restraints upon them more than would apply to the ships of war of France ?

“ Question XII. Should the future Regent of France send a minister to the United States ; ought he to be received ?

“ Question XIII. Is it necessary or adviseable to call together the two Houses of Congress with a view to the present posture of European affairs ? If it is, what should be the particular objects of such a call ?”

On some of these questions he had already made up his mind, as appears from his communications to Mr Morris, but he thought it expedient to take a view of the whole subject.

At the proposed meeting, the Cabinet unanimously recommended to the President to issue a Proclamation of Neutrality, forbidding the citizens of the United States to engage in any act of hostility against either of the belligerent powers, or to carry either of them articles, contraband of war, and requiring them to refrain from all acts, unfriendly towards nations with whom the United States were at peace. This Proclamation the President immediately issued.

It was unanimously recommended to the President to receive a Minister from the French Republick. The Cabinet was also united in the opinion, that it was inexpedient to call Congress together. On the other questions the usual difference of sentiment existed.

The Secretary of State and the Attorney General conceived that the changes in the government of France made no essential difference in the relation of the two nations; but that in all respects the intercourse should proceed on principles established with the monarchy. The Secretaries of the Treasury and of War, admitted the right of a nation to change the form of its government at will, but denied its right to involve other nations in all the consequences of alterations they might be disposed to make. The convulsions of France they thought threatened dangers to nations in alliance with her, and maintained that the United States were at liberty to suspend the operation of treaties with that country, when it was necessary for their own safety.

Messrs. Jefferson and Randolph also contended that it was inexpedient to come to any decision respecting the application of the article of the guarantee to the present government. Messrs. Hamilton and Knox were of opinion that France being the aggressor, the war on her part was offensive, that the guarantee respecting only defensive war, did not apply to the present state of things.

The President again required the reasons in writing of each opinion, and after due investigation established those maxims for the support of neutral rights, which he firmly, but temperately maintained through the succeeding period of his administration; and which, amidst conflicts that prostrated the stablest pillars of European governments, preserved his country from the miseries of war.

In the state of the publick sentiment which we have noticed, Mr. Genet landed April 8th, 1793, at Charleston, South-Carolina, as the Minister of Republican France. Ardent in the constitutional temperament of his mind, inflated with the zeal of a new convert to the doctrine of liberty and equality, he conceived that the enlightened world felt a high interest in the revo-

bation of his country, and that every man of virtue was disposed to espouse her cause. His reception at Charleston was calculated to increase his most sanguine views. From the Supreme Magistrate of the state, and from every class of citizens, he received warm expressions of enthusiastick devotion to the new Republick. Taking these as evidence of the general disposition of the American people, he did not wait to present his official letter to the Executive, and to be accredited by him; but availing himself of the favourable situation of Charleston to fit out privateers against the West Indian trade, he presumed to authorize the arming of ships in that port, and to give commissions to cruise against the commerce of a nation with whom the United States were at amity. Prizes taken by these privateers were brought into American harbours, and French Consuls were opening Courts of Admiralty to condemn them.

From Charleston Mr. Genet travelled by land to Philadelphia, receiving in every part of his way the same ardent declarations of attachment to France. Although the unwarrantable conduct of Mr. Genet at Charleston was well known in Philadelphia, yet his entrance into the city was rendered pompous and triumphal, and "crowds flocked from every avenue of the city to meet the Republican Ambassador of an allied nation." On the day after his arrival, addresses were presented to him from particular societies, and from individual citizens, in which they expressed their exultation at the victories of France, and declared that in their opinion, her success was essential to the safety of the American states.

On the 18th of May he presented his credentials to the President. These contained respectful sentiments towards the government of the United States, and abounded with devotions to the American people. The President received him in an open and ingenuous

manner, and with sincerity expressed his regard for the French nation.

In this conference Mr. Genet declared that his government had no desire to engage the United States in the European war, but wished them to pursue their own interest; yet he persisted in the exercise of his assumed power, and a French privateer captured an English merchantman within the Capes of the Delaware, while on her way to the ocean. This prize being taken in the waters of the United States, and therefore under the control of the government, the British minister complained of this illicit proceeding, and demanded restitution of the property unlawfully taken from his countrymen.

The Cabinet unanimously agreed that the proceedings of Mr. Genet were not warranted by any existing treaties between the two nations, were therefore violations of neutral rights, and that the government ought to prevent the repetition of them. They also agreed that restitution ought to be made, of the prize taken within the waters of the Delaware. Respecting prizes taken upon the high seas, in virtue of commissions issued by Genet, and brought into the American ports, the Cabinet were divided. Mr. Jefferson and Mr. Randolph held that the government was under no obligation to restore them to their original owners. Colonel Hamilton and General Knox contended that, to maintain an honest neutrality, the United States were bound to restore the prizes.

The President took time to deliberate on those points on which his Council were not agreed.

Principles in which they were united, he established; and directed the Secretary of State to give the necessary information to the Ministers of France and Britain.

Mr. Genet complained heavily of these rules of the American Government, as a violation of neutral right,

and as a breach of existing treaties between the two nations.

In his comments upon these treaties, he claimed for France every thing which the two nations had bound themselves not to grant to other countries, converting negative stipulations which respected other nations, into grants of positive privileges to the contracting parties.

He was informed, that out of respect to him, the subject had been reviewed in the Cabinet; but that the President saw no reason to change his opinion. Mr. Genet still refused acquiescence, and seemed to have entertained the expectation, that he should be able so far to avail himself of the partiality of the Americans for France, as to bend the Administration to his own purposes, or to overthrow it.

Prosecutions having been commenced against two of the American citizens, whom Genet engaged at Charleston, to cruise in the service of France, he demanded these men of the civil magistrate who had arrested them, in the following very extraordinary language.

"I have this moment been informed that two officers in the service of the Republick of France, citizens Gideon Henfield and John Singletary, have been arrested on board the privateer of the French Republick, the Citizen Genet, and conducted to prison. The crime laid to their charge, the crime which my mind cannot conceive, and which my pen almost refuses to state, is the serving of France, and defending with her children the common glorious cause of liberty.

"Being ignorant of any positive law or treaty which deprives Americans of this privilege, and authorizes officers of police arbitrarily to take mariners in the service of France from on board their vessels, I call upon your intervention, sir, and that of the President of the United States, in order to obtain the immediate releasement of the above mentioned officers, who have

acquired by the sentiments animating them, and by the act of their engagement, antierour to every act to the contrary, the right of French citizens, if they have lost that of American citizens."

The President considered this insolent demand as an attack upon the honour and independence of the United States ; but without noticing the intemperate language of the French Minister, he steadily pursued the publick interest.

The leading individuals of that portion of the American people who had been opposed to the adoption of the National constitution, and were opposed to the measures of the Administration under it, in the partialities and prejudices manifested throughout the Union towards France and Great Britain, saw the probable means to weaken the confidence, and alienate the affection which the citizens of the United States manifested towards the President ; and in this way to bring about a revolution in the national government. In pursuance of this plan, the resentments and the enthusiastick sympathies of the people were fostered ; and democrattick societies, in imitation of the Jacobin Club in Paris, were formed. The victories of France were celebrated by feasts, bonfires, and other publick rejoisings.

The measures adopted by the Executive to preserve the peace of the nation, were vilified in the newspapers devoted to the opposition ; the proclamation of neutrality was declared to be an exercise of power, with which the Constitution did not invest the President ; and the measures of the Administration generally were pronounced to be unfriendly to France, and to carry evidence of their intention to break with that Republick and to join in the royal crusade against liberty. Mr. Genet was justified in the construction of the existing treaties between the two nations, and he was urged to persist in his opposition to the measures of the American government.

The President deeply felt the insult offered to the nation, by the attempt of the French Minister to continue the exercise of an usurped authority within the United States ; but he knew the importance of yielding to the feelings of his countrymen, as far as consisted with the dignity of his station, and with the independence, the peace, and welfare of his country. He contented himself with confuting in a cool and dispassionate manner the extravagant positions of Mr. Genet, and inflexibly adhered to his system.

Private business called him to Mount Vernon, and he was absent from the seat of government from the 24th of June to the 11th of July. During his absence the Heads of Departments superintended the execution of the measures that had been agreed upon in the Cabinet. At this time an event took place which fully exhibits the rashness of the French Minister, and shows the difficulty to which he subjected the administration.

A French privateer brought an English merchantman, the *Little Sarah*, into Philadelphia. This vessel Genet equipped as a privateer. Having mounted fourteen iron cannon, and six swivels, and taken on board one hundred and twenty men, a number of whom were Americans, she was about to sail under the name of *La Petite Democrat*. In this situation the Secretary of the Treasury reported her case to the Secretaries of State and of War. Governour Mifflin was in consequence requested to make examination, and on the 14th of July he reported that she was to sail next day. By desire of the Heads of Departments the Governour sent Mr. Dallas, Secretary of State for Pennsylvania, to request Mr. Genet to relieve them from the disagreeable necessity of preventing by force the sailing of a privateer equipped in their ports. This request excited in that Minister the most violent passion, which he vented in very intemperate and abusive language, declared that *La Petite Democrat* would repel force by force, and threatened to appeal from the Executive to

the people. Mr. Jefferson in person waited upon him to renew the request, that he would order the privateer not to sail until the pleasure of the President could be known ; Mr. Jefferson reported, that after an ebullition of passion, and some equivocation, he understood Mr. Genet to promise, that the privateer should fall down below Chester, and there wait the will of the President. Colonel Hamilton and General Knox were for taking measures to prevent her sailing, but Mr. Jefferson, professing his confidence in the promise of Mr. Genet, opposed them, and they were not put in execution.

These proceedings were immediately reported to the President on his return to the seat of government. Mr. Jefferson had then retired, indisposed, to his country house, and the President wrote him as follows :

“ What is to be done in the case of the Little Sarah, now at Chester ? Is the Minister of the French Republick to set the acts of this government at defiance with impunity ? And threaten the Executive with an appeal to the people ? What must the world think of such conduct ? And of the United States in submitting to it ?

“ These are serious questions. Circumstances press for decision ; and as you have had time to consider them, upon me they come unexpectedly, I wish to know your opinion upon them even before to-morrow, for the vessel may then be gone.”

In answer to this letter, the Secretary of State informed the President, that Mr. Genet had assured him that the vessel should not sail before the decision of the Executive respecting it should be known ; and coercive measures were therefore suspended. In Council, next day, it was determined to detain the armed vessels of belligerents in port. This determination was made known to Genet, but in contempt of it the privateer sailed. The opposition applauded even this act of resistance in the French Minister. The un-

wearied endeavour of the Administration, by a faithful observance of treaties, and an impartial treatment towards belligerent powers, to secure the blessings of peace, and the rights of neutrality to the United States, was construed into a violation of those treaties, and into an insidious scheme to force the country into a war against France.

The French Minister persisted in his exposition of the treaty, and in repeated letters, written in abusive and insulting language, to the Secretary of State, demanded reparation of injuries his country had sustained.

The President was at length convinced of the necessity of taking effectual measures with Genet, and on the 25th of July he wrote the following letter to Mr. Jefferson.

“As the official conduct of Mr. Genet, relatively to the affairs of this government, will have to undergo a very serious consideration, so soon as the special court at which the Attorney General is now engaged, will allow him to attend with convenience, in order to decide upon measures proper to be taken thereupon, it is my desire that all the letters to and from that Minister may be ready to be laid before me, the Heads of Departments, and the Attorney General, whom I shall advise with on the occasion, together with the minutes of such oral communications as you may have had with him on the subject of these letters, &c. And as the memorials from the British Minister, and answers thereto, are materially connected therewith, it will be proper, I conceive, to have these ready also.”

The Executive proceeded with the unanimous consent of the Cabinet, to establish a system by which to regulate the intercourse with nations at war. The rules adopted give evidence of the unalterable purpose of the President, sacredly to observe all national engagements, and honestly to perform every duty due to belligerent powers; and they manifest a determina-

tion to insist on the uninterrupted exercise of the rights of neutrality for his own country. It was also agreed that prizes brought into American ports, by privateers equipped in them, should be restored, or compensation be made for them, and that armed vessels of this description should not be permitted to remain in American harbours.

These regulations were communicated to the Ministers of the belligerent nations, and in the same letter, the privileges stipulated by treaty for France were stated, and a solicitude was expressed for their security.

After deliberate attention to the conduct and correspondence of the French Minister, it was agreed that a letter should be written to Mr. Morris, American Minister at Paris, stating the reasons on which the measures of the Administration with belligerent nations were founded, giving information of the disagreement of Mr. Genet with the government, and requesting his recall. The communication to the French government on this subject concluded in the following manner. "After independence and self government, there was nothing America more sincerely wished than perpetual friendship with them."

The threat of Mr. Genet to appeal from the President to the people being reported on most respectable authority, made a deep impression on the public mind. That portion of the American people, which were originally in favour of adopting the National Constitution of government generally approved the measures of the Administration; and although they thought favourably of the revolution of France, and wished well to our cause, yet they were indignant at the insult offered by her minister to the Chief Magistrate of the United States. The appeal having been made to them, they felt themselves constrained by every feeling of patriotism to support their own government in measures they deemed to be fair, just, and impartial. In

every part of the United States, the people assembled in their towns and districts, to express their opinions on public measures. The contest was warm, but the great majority of voices was found on the side of the Administration, its measures were approved; and it fully appeared that the affection and confidence of the American people in the President, existed in their force and efficacy. Yet at the moment that public indignation was expressed at the attempt to exercise a foreign influence over the American councils, it was evident that those who expressed it, felt a strong partiality in favour of France in her contention with England.

In the spirit of conciliation, General WASHINGTON determined not to take violent measures with Genet, until the result of the complaint lodged against him with his own government, should be known, and with magnanimity he bore his abuses. But at length, patience and forbearance were exhausted.

In 1794 the French Minister deliberately planned two expeditions against Spain, to be carried on from the United States, and granted commissions to American citizens to be officers in them, who privately enlisted men for the purpose. The conquest of the Floridas was the object of one of these expeditions, and Georgia was the place of rendezvous for the troops destined to this service. The other was designed for the invasion of Louisiana, and was to be prosecuted from Kentucky down the Ohio and Mississippi. The arrangements were all made; but before the plan was ripe for execution, the government interposed, and some of the principal agents were arrested. No government, the President conceived, which had any pretensions to independence, could submit to insults of this nature.

Having consulted with the Vice President, the Heads of Departments, and other leading characters in the government, he determined to suspend the ministerial

functions, and to confine the person of Genet. Messages to the two houses of the Legislature on this subject were prepared, and orders were given to the Marshal to take the French Minister into custody. But the evening preceding the day on which these orders were to have been carried into execution, official letters from Mr. Morris informed the President, that Mr. Genet was recalled, which prevented the necessity of carrying the measure to extremity. One instance among many, of the independence, the firmness, and the good fortune of President WASHINGTON.

Mr. Fauchet, the successor of Mr. Genet, brought assurances that his government disapproved of the conduct of his predecessor, and made warm declarations of his own disposition to consult the peace and honour of the government of the United States, and his practices for a time corresponded with his language.

About this period, the Executive of the French government made known to the President their wishes that Mr. Morris might be recalled. He immediately complied with their request, and nominated Colonel Monroe of Virginia as his successor, an appointment peculiarly pleasing to the friends of France.

The task of the Executive was rendered still more delicate, arduous, and difficult, by the conduct of Great Britain.

The Court of London had declined a treaty with Congress under the old Confederation. At the commencement of the Federal Government, the Administration was disposed to negotiate with Great Britain without committing the honour of the nation. Mr. Gouverneur Morris, who was in England on private business, was directed to open an informal conference with members of the British Cabinet on the subject of American affairs. With much address he executed this commission but to little purpose. He informed the President, that the Duke of Leeds and Mr. Pitt

manifested a disposition to live on terms of amity and friendship with the United States; but discovered no inclination to enter into a commercial treaty with them; that they complained of the neglect of the American government to execute the stipulations of the treaty of peace, for which neglect they justified their retention of the Western Posts.

In this situation the French revolution found Great Britain and the United States. At the commencement of the war between France and England, various circumstances indicated the probability that America would be brought into the contention against Britain.

The warm and animated expressions of fraternity made by the American people towards France; the festivals in celebration of French victories, and the manifest partiality which many discovered for her in the management of the war, probably led the British Cabinet to think that the United States were disposed to become parties in the war, and induced them to adopt measures to meet this hostile spirit. On the other hand, the unfriendly indications of the English Court, and the impressments of American seamen in the British ports, in addition to the common vexation of neutrals on the high seas, and the attempt to starve France by carrying American provision vessels into English ports, was so much fuel to feed the passions of the Americans already in a blaze.

In this state of national affairs, the President met Congress on the 4th of December, 1793. In the speech delivered on this interesting occasion, he thus noticed his re-election to the Presidency.

"Since the commencement of the term for which I have been again called into office, no fit occasion has arisen for expressing to my fellow citizens at large the deep and respectful sense which I feel of the renewed testimony of publick approbation. While on the one hand, it awakened my gratitude, for all those instances of affectionate partiality with which I have be-

honoured by my country ; on the other, it could not prevent an earnest wish for that retirement, from which no private consideration should ever have torn me. But influenced by the belief that my conduct would be estimated according to its real motives, and that the people, and the authorities derived from them, would support exertions, having nothing personal for their object, I have obeyed the suffrage which commanded me to resume the executive power ; and I humbly implore that Being on whose will the fate of nations depends, to crown with success our mutual endeavours for the general happiness."

He then made the following communications respecting the measures of the Administration.

"As soon as the war in Europe had embraced those powers with whom the United States have the most extensive relations, there was reason to apprehend that our intercourse with them might be interrupted, and our disposition for peace drawn in question by suspicions too often entertained by belligerent nations. It seemed therefore to be my duty to admonish our citizens of the consequence of a contraband trade, and of hostile acts to any of the parties ; and to obtain by a declaration of the existing state of things an easier admission of our rights to the immunities belonging to our situation. Under these impressions the Proclamation was issued.

"In this posture of affairs, both new and delicate, I resolved to adopt general rules, which should conform to the treaties, and assert the privileges of the United States. These were reduced into a system, which shall be communicated to you."

After noticing those legislative provisions which his experience dictated as necessary, he proceeded :

"I cannot recommend to your notice, measures for the fulfilment of *our* duties to the rest of the world, without again pressing upon you the necessity of placing yourselves in a situation of complete defence, and

of exacting from *them*, the fulfilment of their duties towards us. The United States ought not to indulge a persuasion that, contrary to the order of human events, they will for ever keep at a distance those painful appeals to arms, with which the history of every other nation abounds. There is a rank due to the United States among nations, which will be withheld, if not absolutely lost, by the reputation of weakness. If we desire to avoid insult, we must be able to repel it; if we desire to secure peace, one of the most powerful instruments of our prosperity, it must be known that we are, at all times, ready for war."

After advising the greatest appropriations for the redemption of the publick debt, which the resources of the country would permit, he in the following manner concluded the address.

"The several subjects to which I have now referred open a wide range to your deliberations, and involve some of the choicest interests of our common country. Permit me to bring to your remembrance the magnitude of your task. Without an unprejudiced coolness, the welfare of the government may be hazarded; without harmony, as far as consists with freedom of sentiment, its dignity may be lost. But as the legislative proceedings of the United States will never, I trust, be reproached for the want of temper, or of candour, so shall not the publick happiness languish from the want of my strenuous and warmest co-operations."

The party in the United States, opposed to the general system on which the Federal Government had been administered, by associating the cause of France with their own, had increased their members in the present Congress; but they were not prepared to attack either the discernment or the patriotism of the President. The House of Representatives, in their answer, thus noticed the unanimous suffrage, by which General WASHINGTON had, a second time, been elected to the Presidency.

“It was with equal sincerity and promptitude they embraced the occasion for expressing to him their congratulations on so distinguished a testimony of publick approbation, and their entire confidence in the purity and patriotism of the motives which had produced this obedience to the voice of his country. It is to virtues that have commanded long and universal reverence, and services from which have flowed great and lasting benefits, that the tribute of praise may be paid without the reproach of flattery; and it is from the same sources that the fairest anticipations may be derived in favour of publick happiness.” The proclamation of neutrality was in a cautious manner approved, and a disposition was expressed to support the Executive.

The answer of the Senate breathed unreserved affection and confidence. Referring to the second election of the President, they observed, “In the unanimity which a second time marks this important national act, we trace with particular satisfaction, besides the distinguished tribute paid to the virtues and abilities, which it recognises, another proof of that just discernment, and constancy of sentiments and views, which have hitherto characterized the citizens of the United States.” They declared the Proclamation to be “a measure well timed and wise, manifesting a watchful solicitude for the welfare of the nation, and calculated to promote it.”

At the close of this year, Mr. Jefferson resigned his Secretaryship, and was succeeded by Mr. E. Randolph; and Mr. William Bradford was appointed Attorney General.

After a very animated debate, January, 1794, a bill passed Congress by a very small majority, to build six frigates, and it received the cordial assent of the Executive. This was the commencement of the American navy.

In November 1793 the British government had given the instructions to her ships to detain all vessels laden with

goods, the produce of any colony belonging to France, or carrying provisions, or other supplies to those colonies, and bring them into English ports for adjudication.

These instructions were thought, by reflecting men in America, to be proof of a hostile spirit in the British Cabinet towards the United States, and Congress deemed it expedient to be prepared to meet the probable event of war. They accordingly laid an embargo for the term of thirty days, and with great unanimity adopted provisional measures of self defence.

While these measures were in train, the President on the 4th of April, 1794, transmitted to Congress a letter from Mr. Pinckney, who had been appointed Minister at the Court of London, which contained information, that the orders of November were revoked, and instructions given to cruisers to bring in for adjudications only those neutral vessels which were laden with the produce of French Islands on a direct voyage from those islands to Europe; and gave the substance of a conversation between Lord Grenville and Mr. Pinckney in which his Lordship more satisfactorily explained the instructions of November; and manifested a disposition to cultivate peace and amity with the United States.

This communication made a deep impression on the Federal members of Congress. They thought that a door was opened for negotiation, and that war might probably be avoided.

The opposition members and the partisans of France, alarmed by these symptoms of moderation, redoubled their attack upon England, and upon all, who were disposed to cultivate friendship with her. Newspapers were filled with invectives of this nature, and every epithet of vileness and calumny was made use of to inflame the publick mind, and increase the hostility of the nation against Great Britain. The majority of Congress discovered a disposition to proceed in their

military preparations, in which the sentiment of the community seemed to support them, and general appearances still indicated approaching hostilities.

The President foresaw the evils that must be introduced by a war with Great Britain, in the distempered state of the publick mind. He knew that she commanded the Ocean, that she presented the best markets for the exports of the United States, and furnished, on the easiest terms, those manufactures which were necessary to his countrymen. He perceived that the devotion of the people to France would throw the United States into her arms, and that his country must become a mere satellite of her will. He was not without some apprehension, that the bloody and ferocious spirit that had disgraced the French revolution, might be introduced into the peaceable society of America.

Under these solemn impressions, he determined to use his endeavours to arrest the dreaded evil, and on the 16th of April he nominated in the Senate an Envoy Extraordinary to the Court of Great Britain, and for the following reasons.

“The communications which I have made to you during your present session, from the despatches of our Minister in London, contain a serious aspect of our affairs with Great Britain. But as peace ought to be pursued with unremitted zeal, before the last resource, which has so often been the scourge of nations, and cannot fail to check the advanced prosperity of the United States, is contemplated, I have thought proper to nominate John Jay, as Envoy Extraordinary of the United States to his Britannick Majesty.

“My confidence in our Minister Plenipotentiary in London continues undiminished. But a mission like this, while it corresponds with the solemnity of the occasion, will announce to the world a solicitude for the friendly adjustment of our complaints, and a reluctance to hostility. Going immediately from the

United States, such an Envoy will carry with him a full knowledge of the existing temper and sensibility of our country ; and will thus be taught to vindicate our rights with firmness, and to cultivate peace with sincerity."

To a considerable part of Congress, and to a large portion of the American people, this decisive act was unexpected and displeasing ; and it was adopted in full view of the obloquy and abuse of which it would be the occasion.

A motion made to stay the proceedings against Great Britain, on account of the pending negotiation was overruled in the House of Representatives ; and a bill prohibiting commercial intercourse with her carried by a considerable majority ; which was lost in the Senate by the casting vote of the Vice President.

The authority of the Executive to issue the proclamation of neutrality had by many been doubted ; his power to call out the militia to prevent the sailing of privateers, which had violated his rules, denied ; and the American citizens, who had been prosecuted for engaging in expeditions against the nations at war, had been acquitted by a jury of trials. The President therefore, although entertaining himself no doubt about his constitutional authority, was desirous to obtain the sanction of Congress for the system he had adopted to preserve the peace of the country.

At the commencement of the session, he intimated to the National Legislature the propriety of the measure, and in pursuance of his advice, the Senate introduced a bill, prohibiting within the United States the exercise, by Foreign Ministers, of those acts of sovereignty which Genet claimed, and subjecting to fine and imprisonment those who should be guilty of any of the acts towards the belligerent nations, which the Executive had forbidden. This bill, necessary as it was to the honour and peace of the nation, was opposed by the whole force of the Antifederalists, and finally

passed the Senate by the casting vote of the Vice President.

On the 9th of June, 1794, the session of Congress, which had been active and stormy, closed.

In the course of this year, the President was called to an important, but painful duty in administering the domestick concerns of the government.

Under the last Presidency an act had passed, laying a duty on spirits distilled within the United States.

To the inhabitants in the Western Counties of Pennsylvania this was highly offensive. The whole district had been from the beginning, hostile to the Federal Constitution. They had with acrimony opposed its adoption, and were in opposition to all the measures of the Administration. Emboldened by the hoarse and loud clamours of their party, they absolutely refused compliance with the law. The President with anxiety saw this combination, but waited in the expectation that the quiet submission to the act in other parts of the Union, would induce the people of this district to yield obedience. In the mean time he recommended to Congress to modify the act in such a manner as to remove every reasonable objection. Accordingly in May, 1792, the National Legislature took up the subject, and made such alterations in the act, as experience dictated would be salutary. This revision did not conciliate the insurgents. The officers, who attempted to collect the duty, were violently opposed. In County and District Conventions, a systematick opposition was planned ; and banishment from the circle of good neighbourhood, and from all the benefits and pleasures of social intercourse, was denounced against all who should aid the publick officers ; and the officers themselves were threatened with every personal outrage, should they persist in the endeavour to execute the duties of their office.

Knowing the importance of breaking this daring combination, the President issued a Proclamation, ad-

monishing all persons to desist from proceedings designed to obstruct the execution of the laws, requiring the interposition of magistrates in support of government, and directing the prosecution of offenders.

The Proclamation not producing the desired effect, he endeavoured to prevent the necessity of having recourse to a military force, by making it the interest of the distillers to pay the duty.

Prosecutions were instituted against delinquents, where they could be sustained, the spirits distilled in the counties opposing the law were ordered to be seized on their way to market, by the officers of the revenue, and the contractors for the army were directed to purchase only the spirits, on which the duties had been paid. But whatever were the wishes of the distillers, the fear of an infuriated populace prevented a compliance with these orders; and the insurgents took encouragement from the lenity of the Executive, in the expectation of ultimate success. By violent threats they deterred the Marshal from the service of his precepts, committed numerous outrages upon the friends of government, and organized themselves into military bands to resist any force that might be sent to subject them to the laws.

The President had for three years patiently waited the effect of conciliatory measures, but these had only rendered the opposition more desperate. He therefore had only to choose between the alternative of permitting the prostration of the government, or to call out its force in support of the laws.

The subject in all its momentous consequences was laid before the Cabinet, and General Mifflin, the Governour of Pennsylvania, was on this occasion called into the Council. Their unanimous desire was to avoid, if possible, the coercion of the military, and they therefore advised, that Commissioners should be sent to the insurgents to warn them of their danger, and to offer a pardon of past offences, on condition of

future obedience to the laws. It was also advised that a proclamation should be issued in conformity to the act of Congress, commanding the insurgents to disperse by a given day. But in respect to ultimate operations, there was not an unanimity of opinion. The Governour of Pennsylvania thought that the militia of that state would be insufficient to suppress the insurrection, and appeared apprehensive of danger from the attempt to call out the power of government. Mr. Randolph, Secretary of State, expressed his fears on account of the numbers and strength of the insurgents. He doubted whether the militia would obey the orders of the Executive, and march to suppress by force of arms this combination; if they should, he doubted the success of the expedition, and foreboded civil war in all its horrors as the consequence of a failure.

The Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of War, and the Attorney General, were of opinion, that the President was bound by the most sacred obligations, to use the means placed at his disposal, faithfully to execute the law. They therefore advised him to try the power of the government to coerce submission; and from policy and humanity to march a force into the insurgent counties, too strong to be resisted.

The President did not hesitate to do his duty. Without exerting the means of prevention in his power, he could not see the laws prostrated, and the authority of the United States defied.

On the 7th of August, he issued the Proclamation which the law made a prerequisite to the employment of force. In it he gave a recapitulation of the measures of Government, and of the opposition of the insurgents, and thus proceeded, "Whereas it was in his judgment necessary, under the circumstances of the case, to take measures for calling forth the militia in order to suppress the combinations aforesaid, and to cause the laws to be duly executed, and he had accord-

ingly determined so to do ; feeling the deepest regret for the occasion, but withal the most solemn conviction that the essential interests of the Union demanded it ; that the very existence of government, and the fundamental principles of social order were involved in the issue ; and that the patriotism and firmness of all good citizens were seriously called upon to aid in the suppression of so fatal a spirit." The Proclamation closed by ordering all insurgents, and all other persons whom it might concern, on or before the first day of the ensuing September, to disperse and retire to their respective homes. Orders were on the same day issued to the Governours of New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia, for their respective quotas of twelve thousand men, which at a subsequent period was increased to fifteen thousand, who were to be held in readiness to march at a minute's warning.

Reluctant to draw the sword upon his fellow citizens, the President at this awful crisis determined to make one more attempt to reclaim by mild entreaty his deluded countrymen. The Attorney General, Judge Yates, and Mr. Ross, were commissioned to bear to the insurgents a general amnesty for all past crimes, on condition of future obedience ; but the clemency of the government was again spurned, and its power disregarded.

The insurgents, forming an opinion from the language of democratick societies, and from the publications in antifederal newspapers, seem to have entertained the supposition that their disaffection was generally felt by the citizens of the United States, and that the attempt to suppress them would issue in a revolution of the government.

That the Executive of Pennsylvania might act in unison with the National Administration, Governour Mifflin had also issued a Proclamation, and appointed commissioners to join those of the nation.

The faction opposed to government insidiously attempted to obstruct the execution of the orders of the President, but without effect ; the community expressed unequivocally the determination to support the government, and to execute the laws. The personal influence of Governour Mifflin surmounted the obstructions which arose from the insufficiency of the militia laws of Pennsylvania ; the officers and men of the respective States obeyed the summons with an alacrity that exceeded the expectation of the most sanguine ; and the required number of troops was seasonably in readiness to obey the orders of the Commander in Chief.

The command of the expedition was given to Governour Lee of Virginia, and the Governours of Pennsylvania and New-Jersey commanded the militia of their respective states under him. This force moved into the insurgent counties and bore down all opposition. Thus by the vigour and prudence of the Executive, this formidable and alarming insurrection was, without the sacrifice of a life, subdued.

The President attributed this insurrection in a great degree to the influence of the democrattick societies. This opinion he expressed in his private letters, and in his publick communications to the Legislature. In a letter to Mr. Jay, he observed,

“ That the self-created societies, who have spread themselves over this country, have been labouring incessantly to sow the seeds of distrust, jealousy, and of course discontent, hoping thereby to effect some revolution in the government, is not unknown to you. That they have been the fomenters of the western disturbances, admits of no doubt in the mind of any one who will examine their conduct. But, fortunately they have precipitated a crisis for which they were not prepared ; and thereby have unfolded views which will, I trust, effect their annihilation sooner, than it might have happened.”

General WASHINGTON had the firmness and independence to denounce these societies to the National Legislature, and to lend his personal influence to counteract their designs, thereby bringing upon himself their resentment.

In his official address to Congress, on the 19th of November, he, as a channel of publick information, narrated the rise, progress, and issue of the insurrection, passed a merited encomium on the patriotism of those who had with alacrity exerted themselves to suppress it, and proceeded to observe :

! " To every description of citizens, let praise be given. But let them persevere in their affectionate vigilance over that precious depository of American happiness, the Constitution of the United States. And when in the calm moments of reflection, they shall have retraced the origin and progress of the insurrection, let them determine whether it has not been fomented by combinations of men, who, careless of consequences and disregarding the unerring truth, that those who rouse, cannot always appease a civil convulsion, have disseminated, from an ignorance or perversion of facts, suspicions, jealousies, and accusations of the whole government." He, on this occasion, renewedly recommended to the Legislature the organization of the militia, and made such other communications as the state of the country rendered expedient.

In their answer to this address, the Senate said, " Our anxiety arising from the licentious and open resistance to the laws in the Western Counties of Pennsylvania, has been increased by the proceedings of certain self-created societies relative to the laws and Administrations of the government ; proceedings, in our apprehensions, founded in political error, calculated, if not intended, to disorganize our government, and which, by inspiring delusive hopes of support,

have been instrumental in misleading our fellow citizens in the scene of insurrection."

They expressed an unqualified approbation of the measures adopted by the Executive to suppress the insurrection, and concluded in the following manner. "At a period so momentous in the affairs of nations, the temperate, just, and firm policy that you have pursued in respect to foreign powers, has been eminently calculated to promote the great and essential interest of our country, and has created the fairest title to the publick gratitude and thanks."

The House of Representatives was not thus cordial and approbatory in their answer to the Speech of the President.

After much debate, they omitted to notice the conduct of the Executive with foreign powers, and they made no reply to his observations on self-created societies. In other points, the answer was respectful.

On the last of January 1795, Mr. Hamilton resigned his place as Secretary of the Treasury, and was succeeded by Mr. Oliver Wolcott. And soon after General Knox resigned the Secretaryship of War, and was succeeded by Colonel T. Pickering.

While these events were taking place in America, Judge Jay was executing a commission in England highly important to his country.

From the moment that he was admitted to a conference with the British Cabinet, he with the ardour of a patriot, and the ability of a statesman, devoted himself to the business of his mission. While decorous in his behaviour towards the British crown, he maintained the respectability of his own character, and supported the honour of the United States. Persuaded that war would be the consequence of a failure of his negotiation, he patiently attended to the investigation of the subject in controversy, and finally agreed with Lord Greenville upon a treaty between the two countries.

In a letter to the President, he declared this to be the best it was possible to obtain, and added, "I ought not to conceal from you, that the confidence reposed in your personal character was visible and useful throughout the negotiation."

On the 8th of June, the President submitted the treaty, with the documents which attended it, to the deliberation of the Senate, that they might "in their wisdom decide whether they would advise and consent that it should be ratified."

After deliberate investigation, the Senate, by exactly two thirds of their numbers, the constitutional majority advised to its ratification, with some qualification of the 12th Article.

Great exertion had been made by the party that opposed the mission of Mr. Jay, to keep alive the spirit of hostility to Great Britain. The secrecy observed in the negotiation was pointedly reprobated as a violation of the first principles of a Republican Government, and every circumstance that transpired respecting it, was used as a means to excite odium against the negotiation, and prejudice against the treaty. While the train was laying to enkindle a publick flame, word was received through a credible channel that the British Court had renewed the orders to their cruisers to detain provision vessels bound to French ports. Although the President had previously determined to ratify the treaty, yet on this information, he ordered a strong remonstrance to be drawn against those orders, and suggested to his Cabinet the propriety of suspending the exchange of the ratified treaty, upon their revocation.

In this stage of the business, he was called to Mount Vernon.

During his absence, and while the publick mind was in a state of irritation, a Senator in Congress from Virginia, violating the decorum and the rules of the Senate, sent an incorrect copy of the treaty to the

Editor of a democratick paper, and through the press it was immediately communicated to the publick. If the attempts to negotiate were represented as inconsistent with the honour of the United States, and all the circumstances attending it criminated as a dereliction of the interests of a sister Republick; it cannot be supposed, that the instrument itself, which was the result of mutual concessions, and the adjustment of opposing national interests, should quiet the publick mind, subjected to the despotism of passion and prejudice. Noisy and violent declamation against the treaty abounded in every part of the United States, and few were found, who, unbiassed by national interest, coolly and impartially decided upon its merits.

Publick meetings were holden in all the large towns, and intemperate addresses denouncing the treaty voted, which were published in the Newspapers before they were presented to the President.

Pamphlets were also put into circulation, written with ingenuity and calculated to increase the prejudices against this national transaction, on the pretence that it was a sacrifice of the interests of France in favour of Great Britain.

These violent movements deeply affected the President, but they did not change his determination. His letters, and the general tenour of his conduct at this period, discover the firmness and independence with which he was prepared to resist every attempt unsuitably to bias the Executive. His greatest apprehensions on this occasion were, that France would avail herself of these popular commotions, either to force the government of the United States into her measures, or to embarrass the execution of the treaty, and to render its stipulations in favour of American commerce ineffectual. In a letter of the 29th of July written to the Secretary of State, after mentioning that the state of the country required the utmost circumspection, he added:—
“I have never since I have been in the administration

of the government, seen a crisis which, in my opinion, has been so pregnant with interesting events, nor one from which more is to be apprehended, whether viewed on the one side or the other. From New-York there is, and I am told will farther be, a counter current ; but how formidable it may appear, I know not. If the same does not take place at Boston and other towns, it will afford but too strong evidence that the opposition is in a manner universal, and would make the ratification a very serious business indeed. But as it respects the French, even counter resolutions would, for the reasons I have already mentioned, do little more than weaken, in a small degree, the effect the other side would have." In a letter to the Secretary, of the 31st of July, having mentioned his determination to return to Philadelphia, and stated the firmness and wisdom necessary to meet the crisis, he proceeded, " There is too much reason to believe, from the pains that have been taken before, at, and since the advice of the Senate respecting the treaty, that the prejudices against it are more extensive than is generally imagined. How should it be otherwise, when no stone has been left unturned that could impress on the minds of the people the most errant misrepresentation of facts ; that their rights have not only been neglected, but absolutely sold ; that there are no reciprocal advantages in the treaty ; that the benefits are all on the side of Great Britain ; and what seems to have had more weight with them than all the rest, and has been most pressed ; that the treaty is made with the design to oppress the French Republick, in open violation of our treaty with that nation, and contrary too to every principle of gratitude and sound policy. In time, when passion shall have yielded to sober reason, the current may possibly turn ; but, in the mean while, this government in relation to France and England may be compared to a ship between Scylla and Charybdis. If the treaty is ratified, the partisans of the

French, or rather of war and confusion, will excite them to hostile measures, or at least to unfriendly sentiments; if it is not, there is no foreseeing all the consequences that may follow as it respects Great Britain.

"It is not to be inferred from hence, that I am, or shall be disposed to quit the ground I have taken, unless circumstances more imperious than have yet come to my knowledge, should compel it; for there is but one straight course, and that is to seek truth, and to pursue it steadily. But these things are mentioned to show that a close investigation of the subject is more than ever necessary. Every step should be explored before it is taken, and every word weighed before it is uttered or delivered in writing." In a subsequent letter, in which he mentioned the increasing hostility to the treaty, he added, "All these things do not shake my determination with respect to the proposed ratification; nor will they, unless something more imperious and unknown to me should, in the opinion of yourself and the gentleman with you, make it advisable for me to pause."

On the 11th of August, the President arrived at Philadelphia, and on the next day he brought before the Cabinet the question respecting the immediate ratification of the treaty. The Secretary of State advised to the postponement of this measure, until the orders of the British should be revoked. The other members of the Cabinet voted for an immediate ratification with a strong memorial against those orders. With this advice the President closed. The orders were recalled, and the ratifications of the treaty exchanged.

The President was probably led to this immediate ratification of the treaty by the popular violence, which was raised against it in every part of the United States. He conceived that it was necessary, either at once to arrest its progress, or ultimately to yield to its force. The event proved the soundness of his judgment and

the influence of his character. Violent opposition ceased. Reflection and experience convinced discerning men, that the treaty was a wise and salutary measure.

On the 19th of August 1795, Mr. Randolph resigned his office as Secretary of State. He had been strongly suspected of breach of trust, and of having committed the honour and interest of his country in his communications with the French Minister. To enable him, as he affirmed, to vindicate himself, he requested the sight of a confidential letter, which the President had written to him, and which he had left in the office. His avowed purpose was to publish this, with other documents, to show that he had been disgraced on account of his attachment to France and liberty. "I have directed," replied the President, "that you should have the inspection of my letter of the 22d of July, agreeably to your request; and you are at full liberty to publish without reserve any or every private and confidential letter I ever wrote you; nay more, every word I ever uttered to you or in your presence, from whence you can derive any advantage in your vindication." Happy the ruler, who in the consciousness of the purity of his intentions can, in times of political agitation, thus address a suspected member of his Council, who had been admitted to his unlimited confidence.

Colonel Pickering was removed to the department of State, and Mr. M'Henry appointed Secretary of War. By the death of Mr. Bradford, the office of Attorney General became vacant, which was soon filled by Mr. Lee of Virginia.

In the Autumn of 1795 a treaty was negotiated through the agency of Colonel Humphreys with the the Regency of Algiers, by which a number of American citizens, who had been enslaved, were liberated.

On opening the first session of the fourth Congress, Dec. 1795, the President congratulated the two Houses

on the prosperity of the nation. "I trust," said he; "I do not deceive myself while I indulge the persuasion that I have never met you at any period, when, more than at the present, the situation of our publick affairs has afforded just cause for mutual congratulation; and for inviting you to join with me in profound gratitude to the author of all good for the numerous and extraordinary blessings we enjoy." Then making a brief statement of the situation of the United States in their foreign relations, he thus proceeded.

"This interesting summary of our affairs, with regard to the powers between whom and the United States, controversies have subsisted; and with regard also to our Indian neighbours with whom we have been in a state of enmity or misunderstanding, opens a wide field for consoling and gratifying reflections. If by prudence and moderation on every side, the extinguishment of all the causes of external discord which have heretofore menaced our tranquillity, on terms compatible with our national faith and honour, shall be the happy result, how firm and how precious a foundation will have been laid for accelerating, maturing, and establishing the prosperity of our country."

Recommending a number of national objects, to the attention of the Legislature, the speech was concluded in the following manner.

"Temperate discussion of the important subjects that may arise in the course of the session, and mutual forbearance where there is a difference in opinion, are too obvious and necessary for the peace, happiness, and welfare of our country, to need any recommendation of mine."

The answer of the Senate was in their usual cordial and respectful manner.

A majority of the House of Representatives of this Congress was of the party opposed to the general administration of the government. To this party the British treaty was offensive; and their feelings on this

subject had an influence on their reply to the President's speech.

The Committee reported an answer, which contained this clause; "that the confidence of his fellow citizens in the Chief Magistrate remained undiminished." It was moved to strike out this clause because it contained an untruth. In the animated debate that ensued, the friends of the President supported the clause, and maintained with zeal, that the confidence of the American citizens in him had suffered no diminution; the advocates of the motion with pertinacity averred that by a recent transaction the confidence of the people in the President was diminished; and several of the speakers declared, that their own confidence in him was lessened.

To prevent a vote of the House to expunge the clause, it was moved and carried to recommit the answer. In the second report, this clause was in such a manner modified as to pass without objection.

Mr. Monroe reached Paris soon after the fall of Robespierre, his reception as the American Minister was publick, and on the occasion, he gave the Convention the most positive assurances of the fervent attachment of the American people to the interest of France.

The Committee of Safety of France had previously written to the American Congress, and the Executive of the Federal Government being the constituted organ of foreign intercourse, the Senate and House of Representatives had, by their resolves, transmitted this letter to the President with a request, that he would in a respectful answer express their friendly disposition towards the French Republick. Accordingly the Secretary of State addressed two letters to the Committee of Safety, in the name of each branch of the Legislature. These Mr. Monroe conveyed, and delivered with his own credentials to the President of the Convention.

The communications of the American Minister were

received with expressions of high gratification, and the Convention decreed, that the flags of France and America should be united, and suspended in their hall, as an emblem of the eternal union and friendship of the two Republicks.

Colonel Monroe, to reciprocate this act of fraternity, requested the Convention to accept from him the American flag, as evidence of his own sensibility, and as a token of the satisfaction with which his country would improve every opportunity to promote the union of the two nations.

Mr. Adet, the successor of Mr. Fauchet, arrived at Philadelphia in the summer of 1795, and brought with him the flag of France as a compliment from the Convention to Congress, and a letter from the Committee of Safety to this body. He made no mention to the President of this present until December, intending to present it directly to Congress, and to avail himself of the opportunity to address that body. The President and the Heads of Departments, perceiving his intention to make a bridge of the Executive to open a direct communication with the popular branch of Congress, and apprehending evil from it, with address defeated the intriguing scheme. They directed, that the flag and the letter should be placed in the hands of the President, and by him presented to Congress. The 1st of January 1796, was appointed as the time on which the President would receive them. Mr. Adet on this occasion addressed him in the impassioned language of his countrymen. He represented France as exerting herself in defence of the liberty of mankind.

"Assimilated to, or rather identified with free people by the form of her government, she saw in them," he observed, "only friends and brothers. Long accustomed to regard the American people as her most faithful allies, she sought to draw closer the ties already formed in the fields of America, under the auspices of victory, over the ruins of tyranny."

To answer this speech was a delicate task. Animated expressions of attachment and friendship for France were expected ; and it was improper for the Executive of a neutral nation to show partiality or prejudice towards belligerent powers.

The following was the reply of the President.

" Born, sir, in a land of liberty ; having early learned its value ; having engaged in a perilous conflict to defend it ; having, in a word, devoted the best years of my life to secure its permanent establishment in my own country ; my anxious recollections, my sympathetick feelings, and my best wishes are irresistibly attracted, whensoever, in any country, I see an oppressed nation unfurl the banners of freedom. But above all, the events of the French revolution have produced the deepest solicitude, as well as the highest admiration. To call your nation brave, were to pronounce but common praise. Wonderful people ! Ages to come will read with astonishment the history of your brilliant exploits. I rejoice that the period of your toils and of your immense sacrifices is approaching. I rejoice that the interesting revolutionary movements of so many years have issued in the formation of a Constitution designed to give permanency to the great object for which you have contended. I rejoice that liberty, which you have so long embraced with enthusiasm—liberty, of which you have been the invincible defenders, now finds an asylum in the bosom of a regularly organised government ; a government which, being formed to secure the happiness of the French people, corresponds with the ardent wishes of my heart, while it gratifies the pride of every citizen of the United States by its resemblance to their own. On these glorious events, accept, sir, my sincere congratulations.

" In delivering to you these sentiments, I express not my own feelings only, but those of my fellow citi-

zens in relation to the commencement, the progress, and the issue of the French revolution; and they will certainly join with me in purest wishes to the Supreme Being, that the citizens of our sister republick, our magnanimous allies, may soon enjoy in peace, that liberty which they have purchased at so great a price, and all the happiness that liberty can bestow.

"I receive, sir, with lively sensibility, the symbol of the triumphs, and of the enfranchisements of your nation, the colours of France, which you have now presented to the United States. The transaction will be announced to Congress, and the colours will be deposited with the archives of the United States, which are at once the evidence and the memorials of their freedom and independence; may these be perpetual; and may the friendship of the two Republicks be commensurate with their existence."

The address of the French Minister, the reply of the President, the flag of France, and the letter of the Committee of Safety, were all transmitted by the President to Congress.

In February 1796, the treaty was returned in the form recommended by the Senate, and ratified by his Britannick Majesty; and on the last of that month, the President issued his Proclamation stating its ratification, and declaring it to be the law of the land.

The predominant party in the House of Representatives expressed surprise, that this Proclamation should be issued before the sense of the House was taken on the subject; as they denied the power of the President and Senate to complete a treaty without their sanction. In March a resolution passed, requesting the President "to lay before the House a copy of the instructions to the Minister of the United States, who negotiated the treaty with the King of Great Britain, communicated by his message of the first of March, together with the correspondence and other documents

relative to the said treaty ; excepting such of the said papers as any existing negotiation may render improper to be disclosed."

This resolve placed the President in a situation of high responsibility. He knew that the majority of the House entertained the opinion, that a treaty was not valid until they had acted upon it. To oppose, in a government constituted like that of the United States, the popular branch of the Legislature would be attended with hazard, and subject him to much censure and abuse ; but considerations of this nature make but weak impressions on a mind supremely solicitous to promote the publick interest.

Upon the most mature deliberation, the President conceived, that to grant this request of the House, would establish a false and dangerous principle in the diplomatick transactions of the nation, and he gave the following answer to their request.

" GENTLEMEN OF THE

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,

" With the utmost attention I have considered your resolution of the 24th instant, requesting me to lay before your House a copy of the instructions to the Minister of the United States, who negotiated the treaty with the King of Great Britain, together with the correspondence and other documents relative to that treaty, excepting such of the said papers as any existing negotiation may render improper to be disclosed.

" In deliberating upon this subject, it was impossible for me to lose sight of the principle which some have avowed in its discussion, or to avoid extending my views to the consequences which must flow from the admission of that principle.

" I trust that no part of my conduct has ever indicated a disposition to withhold any information which the Constitution has enjoined it upon the President as a duty to give, or which could be required of him by either house of Congress as a right ; and with truth I

affirm, that it has been, and will continue to be, while I have the honour to preside in the government, my constant endeavour to harmonize with the other branches thereof, as far as the trust delegated to me by the people of the United States, and my sense of the obligation it imposes, to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution, will permit.

“ The nature of foreign negotiations require caution, and their success must often depend on secrecy ; and even when brought to a conclusion, a full disclosure of all the measures, demands, or eventual concessions which may have been proposed or contemplated, would be extremely impolitick ; for this might have a pernicious influence on future negotiations, or produce immediate inconveniences, perhaps danger and mischief to other persons. The necessity of such caution and secrecy was one cogent reason for vesting the power of making treaties in the President, with the advice and consent of the Senate, the principle on which that body was formed, confining it to a small number of members.

“ To admit then a right in the House of Representatives to demand and to have as a matter of course, all the papers respecting a negotiation with a foreign power, would be to establish a dangerous precedent.

“ It does not occur that the inspection of the papers asked for, can be relative to any purpose under the cognizance of the House of Representatives, except that of an impeachment, which the resolution has not expressed. I repeat that I have no disposition to withhold any information which the duty of my station will permit, or the publick good shall require to be disclosed ; and in fact, all the papers affecting the negotiation with Great Britain were laid before the Senate, when the treaty itself was communicated for their consideration and advice.

“ The course which the debate has taken on the resolution of the house, leads to some observations on

the mode of making treaties under the Constitution of the United States.

“ Having been a member of the General Convention, and knowing the principles on which the Constitution was formed, I have ever entertained but one opinion upon this subject ; and from the first establishment of the government to this moment, my conduct has exemplified that opinion. That the power of making treaties is exclusively vested in the President, by and with the consent of the Senate, provided two thirds of the Senators present concur ; and that every treaty so made, and promulgated, thenceforward becomes the law of the land. It is thus that the treaty making power has been understood by foreign nations ; and in all the treaties made with them, *we* have declared, and *they* have believed, that when ratified by the President with the advice and consent of the Senate, they became obligatory. In this construction of the Constitution, every House of Representatives has heretofore acquiesced ; and until the present time, not a doubt or suspicion has appeared to my knowledge, that this construction was not the true one. Nay, they have more than acquiesced ; for until now, without controverting the obligations of such treaties, they have made all the requisite provisions for carrying them into effect.

“ There is also reason to believe that this construction agrees with the opinions entertained by the State Conventions, when they were deliberating on the Constitution ; especially by those who objected to it, because there was not required in commercial treaties, the consent of two thirds of the whole number of the members of the Senate, instead of two thirds of the Senators present ; and because in treaties respecting territorial, and certain other rights and claims, the concurrence of three fourths of the whole number of the members of both houses respectively, was not made necessary.

“ It is a fact declared by the General Convention and universally understood, that the Constitution of

the United States was the result of a spirit of amity and mutual concession. And it is well known, that under this influence, the smaller states were admitted to an equal representation in the Senate with the larger states ; and that this branch of the government was invested with great powers ; for on the equal participation of those powers, the sovereignty and political safety of the smaller states were deemed essentially to depend.

“ If other proofs than these and the plain letter of the Constitution itself be necessary to ascertain the point under consideration, they may be found in the journals of the General Convention which I have deposited in the office of the Department of State. In these journals it will appear, that a proposition was made, that no treaty should be binding on the United States, which was not ratified by a law ; and that the proposition was explicitly rejected.

“ As therefore it is perfectly clear to my understanding that the assent of the House of Representatives is not necessary to the validity of a treaty ; as the treaty with Great Britain exhibits in itself all the objects requiring legislative provision ; and on these the papers called for can throw no light ; and as it is essential to the due administration of the government, that the boundaries fixed by the Constitution between the different departments should be preserved ; a just regard to the Constitution, and to the duty of my office, under all the circumstances of this case, forbid a compliance with your request.”

A resolution moved in the House to make the necessary appropriations to carry the British treaty into effect excited among the members the strongest emotions of human nature, and gave rise to speeches highly argumentative, eloquent, and animated. The debate was protracted until the people assumed the subject. In their respective corporations, meetings were holden, the strength of parties was fully tried, and it clearly

appeared that the great majority were disposed to rally around the Executive. Innumerable petitions were presented to Congress praying them to make the requisite appropriations.

Unwilling to take upon themselves the consequences of resisting the publick will, Congress made the appropriations.

It was not in the administration of the government only, that General WASHINGTON found it necessary to exercise great caution and prudence. The convulsions of France and the political divisions of the United States, rendered it expedient that he should be circumspect in his personal friendships, and in the exercise of benevolent offices towards individual characters.

A sincere friendship had been formed between him and the Marquis La Fayette. This friendship was not disturbed by those vicissitudes in France, which occasioned the exile and foreign imprisonment of that nobleman. These rather increased the sensibility, and strengthened the attachment of the President towards the unfortunate Marquis. But on account of the state of parties in France and America, interpositions in his favour were privately made. The American Ministers at Foreign Courts were directed in an unofficial manner to exert themselves to obtain his liberation, or to render his confinement less oppressive. A confidential agent was sent to Berlin to solicit his liberty; but before he reached his place of destination, the King of Prussia had surrendered the Marquis to the Emperor of Germany. Mr. Pinckney, then at the Court of London, was directed to intimate the wishes of the President to the Austrian Minister at that Court, and to solicit the influence of the British Cabinet in favour of the illustrious prisoner. Disappointed in the expected mediation of Great Britain, the President addressed the following letter immediately to the Emperor of Germany.

"It will readily occur to your Majesty that occasions may sometimes exist, on which official considerations would constrain the Chief of a nation to be silent and passive in relation even to objects which affect his sensibility, and claim his interposition as a man. Finding myself precisely in this situation at present, I take the liberty of writing this private letter to your Majesty, being persuaded that my motives will also be my apology for it.

"In common with the people of this country, I retain a strong and cordial sense of the services rendered to them by the Marquis La Fayette; and my friendship for him has been constant and sincere. It is natural, therefore, that I should sympathize with him and his family in their misfortunes, and endeavour to mitigate the calamities they experience, among which his present confinement is not the least distressing.

"I forbear to enlarge on this delicate subject. Permit me only to submit to your Majesty's consideration, whether his long imprisonment, and the confiscation of his estate, and the indigence and dispersion of his family, and the painful anxieties incident to all those circumstances, do not form an assemblage of sufferings, which recommend him to the mediation of humanity? Allow me, sir, on this occasion, to be its organ; and to entreat that he may be permitted to come to this country on such conditions, and under such restrictions as your Majesty may think it expedient to prescribe.

"As it is a maxim with me not to ask, what under similar circumstances, I would not grant, your Majesty will do me the justice to believe, that this request appears to me to correspond with those great principles of magnanimity and wisdom, which form the basis of sound policy and durable glory."

This letter was sent to Mr. Pinckney, and was by him transmitted through the Austrian Minister to the Emperor. From this period the Marquis was treated

with more mildness, and was soon after discharged from his confinement ; but what influence the President's letter had on these measures is not known.

In 1795, George Washington Motier La Fayette, the son of the Marquis La Fayette, made his escape from France, and arrived with his tutor at Boston. He immediately by letter communicated his situation to General WASHINGTON, and solicited his advice and patronage. The mother of young Fayette was then in France, and the President was surrounded by Frenchmen, the agents or friends of the administration, which had denounced the Marquis. These men were ready to denounce every act of favour done to a man who was proscribed by the French Government. From regard to the safety of that lady, and from prudential considerations in respect to his own official character, he thought it unadvisable to invite him immediately to the seat of government, and publicly to espouse his interest. But he wrote confidentially to a friend in the neighbourhood of Boston, requesting him to visit the young gentleman, to acquaint him with the reason which rendered it inexpedient that he should be invited into the President's family, and, to adopt the language of the letter, to "administer all the consolation that he can derive from the most unequivocal assurances of my standing in the place, and becoming to him a *father, friend, protector, and supporter*."

"Considering how important it is to avoid idleness and dissipation—to improve his mind—and to give him all the advantages which education can bestow, my opinion and my advice to him is, (if he is qualified for admission) that he should enter as a student at the University in Cambridge ; although it should be for a short time only. The expense of which, as also for every other means for his support, I will pay ; and now do authorize you, my dear sir, to draw upon me accordingly. And if it be desired that his tutor should accompany him to the University, any expense that

he shall incur for the purpose, shall be borne by me in like manner."

The tutor of young Fayette thought he might with more advantage pursue his studies in private, and therefore he did not enter the University.

The members of Congress, in opposition to the measures of the Administration, obtained the knowledge of the arrival of a son of the Marquis La Fayette in some part of America. Expecting perhaps that the President had maintained a cold and unfeeling reserve towards him, they instituted an inquiry into his situation : and when they discovered that the President had extended towards young Fayette the assistance and the protection of a friend and a father, they dropped the subject.

This young gentleman remained for a short time in the United States ; returning to France, he distinguished himself in the army of Buonaparte ; but the usual promotions have been denied him.



CHAPTER XIII.

The President calumniated—His Letter to Mr. Jefferson—Statement of the Secretary of the Treasury—The French Directory's attempt to control the American Government—Review of the transactions with France—The President declares his resolution to retire from Publick Life—Meets Congress for the last Time—Describes the Letters that had been forged—Attends the Inauguration of Mr. Adams—Retires to Mount Vernon—Threatening Attitude of France—General Washington appointed Commander in Chief of the American Forces—His opinion of Publick Measures—His Indisposition and Death—Conclusion.

1796. THE friends of General WASHINGTON knew that it was his intention to decline being a candidate at the third election of President, and this was expected by the publick. Warm solicitations were used to dissuade him from the intention, but his determination fixed ; and nothing could change it, excepting a

crisis in the affairs of his country, which would render retirement inconsistent with his duty, and derogatory to his character.

In the possibility of such an event, his friends prevailed with him to withhold the publick expression of his design until it should become necessary to direct the attention of the community to a successor. This silence alarmed the party opposed to his administration. His personal influence at the head of government, they conceived, could alone defeat their plans, and prevent a revolution in the National Council. Since the ratification of the British treaty, they had laid aside the decorous language and exteriour respect, which they had, until that period, observed towards the President, and on this occasion they with the utmost virulence assailed his character. His merit as a soldier, and his wisdom and patriotism as a statesman, were denied; and even his honour and honesty as a man were brought into question. Letters, forged and published in 1776, to injure his reputation as the General in the revolutionary war, were at this time republished as genuine, to excite prejudice against him. The queries, which he had confidentially proposed to the deliberation of his Cabinet, were laid before the publick, with comments designed to show, that they indicated a deadly hostility to France. The queries could have come before the publick only by a breach of confidence in some one of the Cabinet. Mr. Jefferson was disposed to prevent any suspicion from resting on the mind of General WASHINGTON, that he was the dishonourable individual, and for this purpose he addressed a letter to him, to which the President gave the following reply.

“If I had entertained any suspicion before, that the queries which have been published in Bache’s paper, proceeded from you, the assurances you have given of the contrary would have removed them; but the truth is, I harboured none. I am at no loss to conjecture

treaty, and full communications were made to him on the subject. Colonel Monroe was also furnished with documents, calculated to remove uneasiness from the minds of the French Directory respecting this transaction. But instead of communicating to the Directory the documents and reasonings of his government, while they were deliberating on this subject, and before they had committed themselves by any publick act, he reserved them as answers to complaints, that the government of France might make against the treaty with Great Britain.

The President well knew that France had no just ground of complaint against the United States ; but he was apprehensive that her disappointment at the adjustment of a controversy which had long menaced war between Great Britain and America, would induce her to some act of violence. He therefore deemed it highly important, that there should be a Minister at Paris, who fully entered into the views of the Administration. Not being perfectly satisfied with Mr. Monroe, he recalled him, and appointed as his successor, General Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. The French having complained of most of the acts of the American Government, in relation to the powers at war, by order of the President these acts were carefully reviewed, a fair and minute detail of all points of difference between the two nations given, and the measures of the Administration defended by unanswerable arguments. Upon this lucid and conclusive vindication of the measures of the Administration, the President relied to remove jealousy from the minds of the Directory, and restore the harmony of the two nations ; but unhappily the party at home had taken their ground, and were not by any considerations to be moved from it, and supported by these, the French Directory were not disposed to recede.

At the near approach of the period for the election of a President, it fully appeared, that General Wash-

meron had not lost his hold on the affections and confidence of his countrymen. The public sentiment every where indicated a determination to choose no man an elector, on whom implicit confidence could not be placed, to give his suffrage for General WASHINGTON; and it was satisfactorily ascertained, that should the General consent to be a candidate, he would for the third time be unanimously chosen President of the United States.

In this state of the public mind, in the month of September he published the following address.

"FRIENDS AND FELLOW CITIZENS,

"The period for a new election of a citizen, to administer the Executive Government of the United States being not far distant, and the time actually arrived, when your thoughts must be employed in designating the person, who is to be clothed with that important trust, it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce to a more distinct expression of the publick voice, that I should now apprize you of the resolution I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those, out of whom a choice is to be made.

"I beg you, at the same time, to do me the justice to be assured, that this resolution has not been taken, without a strict regard to all the considerations appertaining to the relation which binds a dutiful citizen to his country; and that, in withdrawing the tender of service, which silence in my situation might imply, I am influenced by no diminution of zeal for your future interest; no deficiency of grateful respect for your past kindness; but am supported by a full conviction that the step is compatible with both.

"The acceptance of, and continuance hitherto in the office to which your suffrages have twice called me, have been a uniform sacrifice of inclination to the opinion of duty, and to a deference for what appeared to be your desire. I constantly hoped that it would

have been much earlier in my power, consistently with motives which I was not at liberty to disregard, to return to that retirement, from which I had been reluctantly drawn. The strength of my inclination to do this, previous to the last election, had even led to the preparation of an address to declare it to you ; but mature reflection on the then perplexed and critical posture of our affairs with foreign nations, and the unanimous advice of persons entitled to my confidence, impelled me to abandon the idea.

“ I rejoice that the state of your concerns, external as well as internal, no longer renders the pursuit of inclination incompatible with the sentiment of duty, or propriety ; and am persuaded whatever partiality may be retained for my services, that in the present circumstances of our country, you will not disapprove my determination to retire.

“ The impressions with which I first undertook the arduous trust, were explained on the proper occasion. In the discharge of this trust, I will only say, that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the government, the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable. Not unconscious, in the outset, of the inferiority of my qualifications, experience in my own eyes, perhaps still more in the eyes of others, has strengthened the motives to diffidence of myself ; and every day the increasing weight of years admonishes me more and more, that the shade of retirement is as necessary to me as it will be welcome. Satisfied, that if any circumstances have given peculiar value to my services, they were temporary, I have the consolation to believe, that while choice and prudence invite me to quit the political scene, patriotism does not forbid it.

“ In looking forward to the moment, which is to terminate the career of my publick life, my feelings do not permit me to suspend the deep acknowledgment of that debt of gratitude which I owe to my be-

loved country, for the many honours it has conferred upon me ; still more for the steadfast confidence with which it has supported me, and for the opportunities I have thence enjoyed of manifesting my inviolable attachment, by services faithful and persevering, though in usefulness unequal to my zeal. If benefits have resulted to our country from these services, let it always be remembered to your praise, and as an instructive example in our annals, that under circumstances in which the passions, agitated in every direction, were liable to mislead, amidst appearances sometimes dubious—vicissitudes of fortune, often discouraging—in situations, in which, not unfrequently, want of success has countenanced the spirit of criticism—the constancy of your support was the essential prop of the efforts, and a guarantee of the plans by which they were effected. Profoundly penetrated with this idea, I shall carry it with me to my grave, as a strong incitement to unceasing vows, that Heaven may continue to you the choicest tokens of its beneficence—that your union and brotherly affection may be perpetual—that the free constitution, which is the work of your hands, may be sacredly maintained—that its administration, in every department, may be stamped with wisdom and virtue—that, in fine, the happiness of the people of these states, under the auspices of liberty, may be made complete, by so careful a preservation, and so prudent a use, of this blessing, as will acquire to them the glory of recommending it to the applause, the affection, and the adoption, of every nation which is yet a stranger to it.

“ Here, perhaps, I ought to stop. But a solicitude for your welfare, which cannot end but with my life, and the apprehension of danger, natural to that solicitude, urge me, on an occasion like the present, to offer to your solemn contemplation, and to recommend to your frequent review, some sentiments which are the result of much reflection, of no inconsiderable observa-

tion, and which appear to me all important to the permanency of your felicity as a people. These will be offered to you with the more freedom, as you can only see in them, the disinterested warnings of a parting friend, who can possibly have no personal motive to bias his counsels. Nor can I forget, as an encouragement to it, your indulgent reception of my sentiments on a former and not dissimilar occasion.

"Interwoven as is the love of liberty with every ligament of your hearts, no recommendation of mine is necessary to fortify or confirm the attachment.

"The unity of government which constitutes you one people, is also dear to you. It is justly so, for it is a main pillar in the edifice of your real independence; the support of your tranquillity at home; your peace abroad; of your safety; of your prosperity; of that very liberty which you so highly prize. But, as it is easy to foresee, that from different causes and from different quarters, much pains will be taken, many artifices employed, to weaken in your minds the conviction of this truth; as this is the point in your political fortress, against which the batteries of internal and external enemies will be most constantly and actively (though often covertly and insidiously) directed; it is of infinite moment that you should properly estimate the immense value of your national union, to your collective and individual happiness; that you should cherish a cordial, habitual, and immovable attachment to it; accustoming yourselves to think and speak of it, as of the palladium of your political safety and prosperity; watching for its preservation with jealous anxiety; discountenancing whatever may suggest even a suspicion that it can, in any event, be abandoned; and indignantly frowning upon the first dawning of every attempt to alienate any portion of our country from the rest, or to enfeeble the sacred ties which now link together the various parts.

"For this you have every inducement of sympathy

and interest. Citizens by birth or choice, of a common country, that country has a right to concentrate your affections. The name of American, which belongs to you, in your national capacity, must always exalt the just pride of patriotism, more than any appellation derived from local discriminations. With slight shades of difference, you have the same religion, manners, habits, and political principles. You have, in a common cause, fought and triumphed together; the independence and liberty you possess are the work of joint counsels, and joint efforts, of common dangers, sufferings, and successes.

“But these considerations, however powerfully they address themselves to your sensibility, are greatly outweighed by those which apply more immediately to your interest. Here every portion of our country finds the most commanding motives for carefully guarding and preserving the union of the whole.

“The *North*, in an unrestrained intercourse with the *South*, protected by the equal laws of a common government, finds in the productions of the latter, great additional resources of maritime and commercial enterprise, and precious materials of manufacturing industry. The *South*, in the same intercourse, benefiting by the agency of the *North*, sees its agriculture grow, and its commerce expand. Turning partly into its own channels the seamen of the *North*, it finds its particular navigation invigorated—and while it contributes, in different ways, to nourish and increase the general mass of the national navigation, it looks forward to the protection of a maritime strength, to which itself is unequally adapted.

“The *East*, in like intercourse with the *West*, already finds, and in the progressive improvement of interior communications, by land and water, will more and more find a valuable vent for the commodities which it brings from abroad, or manufactures at home. The *West* derives from the *East* supplies requisite to its

growth and comfort—and what is, perhaps, of still greater consequence, it must of necessity owe the secure enjoyment of indispensable outlets, for its own productions, to the weight, influence, and the future maritime strength of the Atlantick side of the Union, directed by an indissoluble community of interest as *one nation*. Any other tenure by which the *West* can hold this essential advantage, whether derived from its own separate strength, or from an apostate and unnatural connexion with any foreign power, must be intrinsically precarious.

“ While then every part of our country thus feels an immediate and particular interest in union, all the parts combined cannot fail to find in the united mass of means and efforts, greater strength, greater resource, proportionably greater security from external danger—a less frequent interruption of their peace by foreign nations, and what is of inestimable value, they must derive from union an exemption from those broils and wars between themselves, which so frequently afflict neighbouring countries not tied together by the same government; which their own rivalships, alone would be sufficient to produce, but which opposite foreign alliances, attachments, and intrigues would stimulate and embitter. Hence, likewise, they will avoid the necessity of those overgrown military establishments, which, under any form of government, are inauspicious to liberty, and which are to be regarded as particularly hostile to republican liberty. In this sense it is, that your Union ought to be considered as the main prop of your liberty, and that the love of the one ought to endear to you the preservation of the other.

“ These considerations speak a persuasive language to every reflecting and virtuous mind, and exhibit the continuance of the Union as a primary object of patriotick desire. Is there a doubt whether a common government can embrace so large a sphere? Let experi-

once solve it. To listen to more speculation in such a case were criminal. We are authorized to hope that a proper organization of the whole, with the auxiliary agency of governments for the respective subdivisions, will afford a happy issue to the experiment. It is well worth a fair and full experiment. With such powerful and obvious motives to Union, affecting all parts of our country, while experience shall not have demonstrated its impracticability, there will always be reason to distrust the patriotism of those, who, in any quarter, may endeavour to weaken its bands.

“In contemplating the causes which may disturb our Union, it occurs as a matter of serious concern, that any ground should have been furnished for characterizing parties, by *geographical* discriminations, *North-ern and Southern, Atlantick and Western*; whence designing men may endeavour to excite a belief, that there is a real difference of local interests and views. One of the expedients of party to acquire influence, within particular districts, is to misrepresent the opinions and aims of other districts. You cannot shield yourselves too much against the jealousies and heart burnings which spring from these misrepresentations; they tend to render alien to each other those who ought to be bound together by fraternal affection. The inhabitants of our western country have lately had a useful lesson on this head: they have seen in the negotiation by the Executive, and in the unanimous satisfaction by the Senate, of the treaty with Spain, and in the universal satisfaction at that event throughout the United States, a decisive proof how unfounded were the suspicions propagated among them, of a policy in the general government and in the Atlantick states, unfriendly to their interests in regard to the Mississippi: they have been witnesses to the formation of two treaties, that with Great Britain and that with Spain, which secure to them every thing they could desire, in respect to our foreign relations, to-

wards confirming their prosperity. Will it not be their wisdom to rely for the preservation of these advantages on the Union, by which they were procured? Will they not henceforth be deaf to those advisers, if such there are, who would sever them from their brethren, and connect them with aliens?

“To the efficacy and permanency of your Union, a government for the whole is indispensable. No alliances, however strict, between the parts, can be an adequate substitute. They must inevitably experience the infractions and interruptions which all alliances, in all times, have experienced. Sensible of this momentous truth, you have improved upon your first essay, by the adoption of a Constitution of Government, better calculated than your former for an intimate Union, and for the efficacious management of your common concerns. This government, the offspring of our own choice, uninfluenced and unawed, adopted upon full investigation and mature deliberation, completely free in its principles, in the distribution of its powers, uniting security with energy, and containing within itself a provision for its own amendment, has a just claim to your confidence and your support. Respect for its authority, compliance with its laws, acquiescence in its measures, are duties enjoined by the fundamental maxims of true liberty. The basis of our political systems is, the right of the people to make and to alter their constitution of government. But the constitution which at any time exists, until changed by an explicit and authentick act of the whole people, is sacredly obligatory upon all. The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government, presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

“All obstructions to the execution of the laws, all combinations and associations, under whatever plausible character, with the real design to direct, control, counteract, or awe the regular deliberation and action

of the constituted authorities, are destructive of this fundamental principle, and of fatal tendency. They serve to organize faction, to give it an artificial and extraordinary force, to put in the place of the delegated will of the nation, the will of a party, often a small, but artful and enterprising minority of the community; and, according to the alternate triumphs of different parties, to make the publick administration the mirror of the ill-concerted and incongruous projects of faction, rather than the organ of consistent and wholesome plans, digested by common councils, and modified by mutual interests.

“ However combinations or associations of the above description, may now and then answer popular ends, they are likely, in the course of time and things, to become potent engines, by which cunning, ambitious, and unprincipled men, will be enabled to subvert the power of the people, and to usurp for themselves the reins of government; destroying, afterwards, the very engines which had lifted them to unjust dominion.

“ Towards the preservation of your government, and the permanency of your present happy state, it is requisite, not only that you steadily discountenance irregular oppositions to its acknowledged authority, but also that you resist, with care, the spirit of innovation upon its principles, however specious the pretext. One method of assault may be to effect, in the forms of the Constitution, alterations which will impair the energy of the system, and thus to undermine what cannot be directly overthrown. In all the changes to which you may be invited, remember that time and habit are at least as necessary to fix the true character of government, as of other human institutions; that experience is the surest standard, by which to test the real tendency of the existing constitution of a country; that facility in changes, upon the credit of mere hypothesis and opinion, exposes to perpetual change, from the endless variety of hypothesis and opinion;

and remember, especially, that for the efficient management of your common interests, in a country so extensive as ours, a government of as much vigour, as is consistent with the perfect security of liberty, is indispensable. Liberty itself will find in such a government, with powers properly distributed and adjusted, its surest guardian. It is, indeed, little else than a name, where the government is too feeble to withstand the enterprises of faction, to confine each member of the society within the limits prescribed by the laws, and to maintain all in the secure and tranquil enjoyment of the rights of person and property.

"I have already intimated to you, the danger of parties in the state, with particular references to the founding of them on geographical discriminations. Let me now take a more comprehensive view, and warn you in the most solemn manner against the baneful effects of the spirit of party, generally.

"This spirit, unfortunately, is inseparable from our nature, having its root in the strongest passions of the human mind. It exists under different shapes, in all governments; more or less stifled, controlled, or repressed; but in those of the popular form, it is seen in its greatest rankness, and is truly their worst enemy.

"The alternate domination of one faction over another, sharpened by the spirit of revenge natural to party dissension, which in different ages and countries has perpetrated the most horrid enormities, is itself a frightful despotism: but this leads at length to a more formal and permanent despotism. The disorders and miseries which result, gradually incline the minds of man to seek security and repose in the absolute power of an individual; and sooner or later, the chief of some prevailing faction, more able or more fortunate than his competitors, turns this disposition to the purposes of his own elevation, on the ruins of public liberty.

"Without looking forward to an extremity of this

kind (which nevertheless ought not to be entirely out of sight) the common and continual mischiefs of the spirit of party are sufficient to make it the interest and duty of a wise people to discourage and restrain it. It serves always to distract the public councils and enfeeble the public administration. It agitates the community with ill-founded jealousies and false alarms ; kindles the animosity of one part against another, foment, occasionally, riot and insurrection. It opens the door to foreign influence and corruption, which find a facilitated access to the government itself through the channels of party passions. Thus the policy and the will of one country are subjected to the policy and will of another.

“ There is an opinion that parties in free countries are useful checks upon the administration of the government, and serve to keep alive the spirit of liberty. This, within certain limits, is probably true ; and in governments of a monarchical cast, patriotism may look with indulgence, if not with favour, upon the spirit of party. But in those of the popular character, in governments purely elective, it is a spirit not to be encouraged. From their natural tendency it is certain there will always be enough of that spirit for every salutary purpose ; and there being constant danger of excess, the effort ought to be by force of public opinion, to mitigate and assuage it. A fire not to be quenched, it demands uniform vigilance to prevent its bursting into a flame, lest instead of warming it should consume.

“ It is important likewise, that the habits of thinking, in a free country, should inspire caution in those intrusted with its administration, to confine themselves within their respective constitutional spheres, avoiding in the exercise of the powers of one department to encroach upon another. The spirit of encroachment tends to consolidate the powers of all the departments in one, and thus to create, whatever the

form of government, a real despotism. A just estimate of that love of power, and proneness to abuse it, which predominate in the human heart, is sufficient to satisfy us of the truth of this position. The necessity of reciprocal checks in the exercise of political power, by dividing and distributing it into different depositories, and constituting each the guardian of the publick weal against invasions by the others, has been evinced by experiments ancient and modern; some of them in our country and under our own eyes. To preserve them must be as necessary as to institute them. If, in the opinion of the people, the distribution or modification of the constitutional powers be in any particular wrong, let it be corrected by an amendment, in the way which the Constitution designates: but let there be no change by usurpation; for though this, in one instance, may be the instrument of good, it is the customary weapon by which free governments are destroyed. The precedent must always greatly overbalance in permanent evil any partial or transient benefit which the use can at any time yield.

“Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political prosperity, religion and morality are indispensable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism, who should labour to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. The mere politician, equally with the pious man, ought to respect and to cherish them. A volume could not trace all their connexions with private and publick felicity. Let it simply be asked, where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation desert the oaths which are the instruments of investigation in Courts of Justice? And let us with caution indulge the supposition, that morality can be maintained without religion. Whatever may be conceded to the influence of refined education on minds of peculiar structure, reason and experience both forbid us to expect

that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle.

"It is substantially true that virtue or morality is a necessary spring of popular government. The rule indeed extends with more or less force to every species of free government. Who that is a sincere friend to it can look with indifference upon attempts to shake the foundation of the fabrick ?

"Promote then, as an object of primary importance, institutions for the general diffusion of knowledge. In proportion as the structure of a government gives force to publick opinion, it is essential that publick opinion should be enlightened.

"As a very important source of strength and security, cherish publick credit. One method of preserving it, is to use it as sparingly as possible ; avoiding occasions of expense by cultivating peace, but remembering also, that timely disbursements to prepare for danger, frequently prevent much greater disbursements to repel it : avoiding likewise the accumulation of debt, not only by shunning occasions of expense, but by vigorous exertions in time of peace to discharge the debts which unavoidable wars may have occasioned, not ungenerously throwing upon posterity the burthen which we ourselves ought to bear. The execution of these maxims belongs to your representatives, but it is necessary that publick opinion should cooperate. To facilitate to them the performance of their duty, it is essential that you should practically bear in mind, that towards the payment of debts there must be revenue ; that to have revenue there must be taxes ; that no taxes can be devised which are not more or less inconvenient and unpleasant ; that the intrinsick embarrassment inseparable from the selection of the proper objects (which is always a choice of difficulties) ought to be a decisive motive for a candid construction of the conduct of the government in making it ; and for a spirit of acquiescence in the mea-

tures for obtaining revenue, which the publick exigencies may at any time dictate.

“Observe good faith and justice towards all nations, cultivate peace and harmony with all. Religion and morality enjoin this conduct ; and can it be, that good policy does not equally enjoin it ? It will be worthy of a free, enlightened, and (at no distant period) a great nation, to give to mankind the magnanimous and too novel example of a people always guided by an exalted justice and benevolence. Who can doubt in the course of time and things, the fruits of such a plan would richly repay any temporary advantages which might be lost by a steady adherence to it ? Can it be, that Providence has not connected the permanent felicity of a nation with its virtue ? The experiment, at least, is recommended by every sentiment which ennobles human nature. Alas ! is it rendered impossible by its vices ?

“In the execution of such a plan, nothing is more essential than that permanent, inveterate antipathies against particuar nations, and passionate attachments for others should be excluded ; and that, in place of them, just and amicable feelings towards all should be cultivated. The nation which indulges towards another an habitual hatred, or an habitual fondness, is in some degree a slave. It is a slave to its animosity or to its affection, either of which is sufficient to lead it astray from its duty and its interest. Antipathy in one nation, against another, disposes each more readily to offer insult and injury, to lay hold of slight causes of umbrage, and to be haughty and intractable, when accidental or trifling occasions of dispute occur.

“Hence frequent collisions, obstinate, envenomed, and bloody contests. The nation, prompted by ill will and resentment, sometimes impels to war the government, contrary to the best calculations of policy. The government sometimes participates in the national propensity, and adopts, through passion, what reason

would reject ; at other times, it makes the animosity of the nation subservient to projects of hostility, instigated by pride, ambition, and other sinister and pernicious motives. The peace often, sometimes, perhaps, the liberty of nations has been the victim.

“ So likewise, a passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favourite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest, in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter, without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favourite nation of privileges denied to others, which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions ; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained ; and by exciting jealousy, ill will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld : and it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favourite nation) facility to betray, or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity ; gilding with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.

“ As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practise the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils ! Such an attachment of a small or weak, towards a great and powerful nation, dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.

“ Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence

(I conjure you to believe me, fellow citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be *constantly* awake; since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defence against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation, and excessive dislike of another, cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots, who may resist the intrigues of the favourite, are liable to become suspected and odious; while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.

"The great rule of conduct for us, in regard to foreign nations, is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little *political* connexion as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop.

"Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have none, or a very remote relation. Hence she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties, in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships, or enmities.

"Our detached and distant situation invites and enables us to pursue a different course. If we remain one people, under an efficient government, the period is not far off, when we may defy material injury from external annoyance; when we may take such an attitude as will cause the neutrality we may at any time resolve upon, to be scrupulously respected; when belligerent nations, under the impossibility of making acquisitions upon us, will not lightly hazard the given

us provocation ; when we may choose peace or war, as our interest, guided by justice, shall counsel.

“ Why forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation ? Why quit our own to stand upon foreign ground ? Why, by interweaving our destiny with that of any part of Europe, entangle our peace and prosperity in the toils of European ambition, rivalry, interest, humour, or caprice ?

“ It is our true policy to steer clear of permanent alliances with any portion of the foreign world ; so far, I mean, as we are now at liberty to do it ; for let me not be understood as capable of patronising infidelity to existing engagements. I hold the maxim no less applicable to publick than to private affairs, that honesty is always the best policy. I repeat it, therefore, let those engagements be observed in their genuine sense. But, in my opinion, it is unnecessary and would be unwise to extend them.

“ Taking care always to keep ourselves, by suitable establishments, on a respectable defensive posture, we may safely trust to temporary alliances for extraordinary emergencies.

“ Harmony, and a liberal intercourse with all nations, are recommended by policy, humanity, and interest. But even our commercial policy should hold an equal and impartial hand ; neither seeking nor granting exclusive favours or preferences ; consulting the natural course of things ; diffusing and diversifying, by gentle means, the streams of commerce, but forcing nothing ; establishing, with powers so disposed, in order to give trade a stable course, to define the rights of our merchants, and to enable the government to support them ; conventional rules of intercourse, the best that present circumstances and mutual opinion will permit, but temporary, and liable to be from time to time abandoned or varied, as experience and circumstances shall dictate ; constantly keeping in view, that it is folly in one nation to look for disin-

interested favours from another ; that it must pay, with a portion of its independence for whatever it may accept under that character ; that by such acceptance, it may place itself in the condition of having given equivalents for nominal favours, and yet of being reproached with ingratitude for not giving more. There can be no greater error than to expect, or calculate upon real favours from nation to nation. It is an illusion which experience must cure, which a just pride ought to discard.

“ In offering to you, my countrymen, these counsels of an old and affectionate friend, I dare not hope they will make the strong and lasting impression I could wish ; that they will control the usual current of the passions, or prevent our nation from running the course which has hitherto marked the destiny of nations : but if I may even flatter myself that they may be productive of some partial benefit, some occasional good ; that they may now and then recur, to moderate the fury of party spirit, to warn against the mischiefs of foreign intrigue, to guard against the impostures of pretended patriotism ; this hope will be a full recompense for the solicitude for your welfare, by which they have been dictated.

“ How far, in the discharge of my official duties, I have been guided by the principles which have been delineated, the publick records and other evidences of my conduct must witness to you and to the world. To myself, the assurance of my own conscience is, that I have at least believed myself to be guided by them.

“ In relation to the still subsisting war in Europe, my Proclamation of the 22d of April, 1793, is the index to my plan. Sanctioned by your approving voice, and by that of your Representatives in both Houses of Congress, the spirit of that measure has continually governed me ; uninfluenced by any attempts to deter or divert me from it.

"After deliberate examination with the aid of the best lights I could obtain, I was well satisfied that our country, under all the circumstances of the case, had a right to take, and was bound in duty and interest to take a neutral position. Having taken it, I determined, as far as should depend upon me, to maintain it with moderation, perseverance, and firmness.

"The considerations which respect the right to hold this conduct, it is not necessary, on this occasion, to detail. I will only observe, that according to my understanding of the matter, that right, so far from being denied by any of the belligerent powers, has been virtually admitted by all.

"The duty of holding a neutral conduct may be inferred, without any thing more, from the obligation which justice and humanity impose on every nation, in cases in which it is free to act, to maintain inviolate the relations of peace and amity towards other nations.

"The inducements of interest for observing that conduct will best be referred to your own reflections and experience. With me, a predominant motive has been to endeavour to gain time to our country to settle and mature its yet recent institutions, and to progress without interruption, to that degree of strength and consistency, which is necessary to give it, humanly speaking, the command of its own fortunes.

"Though in reviewing the incidents of my administration, I am unconscious of intentional error, I am nevertheless too sensible of my defects not to think it probable that I may have committed many errors. Whatever they may be, I fervently beseech the Almighty to avert or mitigate the evils to which they may tend. I shall also carry with me the hope that my country will never cease to view them with indulgence; and that after forty-five years of my life dedicated to its service, with an upright zeal, the faults of incompetent abilities will be consigned to oblivion, as myself must soon be to the mansions of rest.

"Relying on its kindness in this, as in other things, and actuated by that fervent love towards it, which is so natural to a man, who views in it the native soil of himself and his progenitors for several generations; I anticipate with pleasing expectation, that retreat, in which I promise myself to realize, without alloy, the sweet enjoyment of partaking, in the midst of my fellow citizens, the benign influence of good laws under a free government—the ever favourite object of my heart, and the happy reward, as I trust, of our mutual cares, labours, and dangers."

This Address to the people of the United States was received with the highest veneration and gratitude. Several of the State Legislatures ordered it to be put upon their journals, and every citizen considered it as the legacy of the most distinguished American Patriot.

On the 7th of December, 1796, the President for the last time, met the National Legislature. In his Speech, after taking a view of the situation of the United States, he, regardless of opposition and censure, recommended the attention of Congress to those measures which he deemed essential to national independence, honour, and prosperity. The first among these was the creation of a Navy.

"To an active external commerce, the protection of a naval force is indispensable. This is manifest with regard to wars in which a State is itself a party: but besides this, it is in our own experience, that the most sincere neutrality is not a sufficient guard against the depredations of nations at war. To secure respect to a neutral flag requires a naval force, organized and ready to vindicate it from insult or aggression. This may even prevent the necessity of going to war, by discouraging belligerent powers from committing such violations of the rights of the neutral party, as may first or last, leave no other option. From the best information I have been able to obtain,

it would seem as if our trade to the Mediterranean, without a protecting force, will always be insecure ; and our citizens exposed to the calamities from which numbers of them have but just been relieved.

“ These considerations invite the United States to look to the means, and to set about the gradual creation of a Navy. The increasing progress of their navigation promises them, at no distant period, the requisite supply of seamen ; and their means, in other respects, favour the undertaking. It is an encouragement, likewise, that their particular situation will give weight and influence to a moderate naval force in their hands. Will it not then be adviseable to begin without delay to provide and lay up materials for the building and equipping of ships of war ; and to proceed in the work by degrees, in proportion as our resources shall render it practicable without inconvenience ; so that a future war of Europe may not find our commerce in the same unprotected state in which it was found by the present.”

He proceeded to recommend those establishments for the manufacturing such articles as are necessary for the defence of the country, an institution for the improvement of agriculture, a Military Academy, and a National University. In reference to foreign powers, he observed :

“ While in our external relations, some serious inconveniences and embarrassments have been overcome, and others lessened, it is with much pain and deep regret I mention that circumstances, of a very unwelcome nature, have lately occurred. Our trade has suffered, and is suffering extensive injuries in the West Indies from the cruisers and agents of the French Republick ; and communications have been received from its minister here, which indicate the danger of a further disturbance of our commerce by its authority ; and which are in other respects far from agreeable.

"It has been my constant, sincere, and earnest wish, in conformity with that of our nation, to maintain cordial harmony, and a perfectly friendly understanding with that Republick. This wish remains unabated ; and I shall persevere in the endeavour to fulfil it to the utmost extent of what shall be consistent with a just and indispensable regard to the rights and honour of our country ; nor will I easily cease to cherish the expectation, that a spirit of justice, candour, and friendship, on the part of the Republick, will eventually ensure success.

"In pursuing this course, however, I cannot forget what is due to the character of our government and nation ; or to a full and entire confidence in the good sense, patriotism, self-respect, and fortitude of my countrymen."

In the following manner, he concluded his Address.

"The situation in which I now stand, for the last time, in the midst of the representatives of the people of the United States, naturally recalls the period when the administration of the present form of Government commenced ; and I cannot omit this occasion to congratulate you and my country on the success of the experiment ; nor to repeat my fervent supplications to the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, and Sovereign Arbiter of Nations, that his providential care may still be extended to the United States ; that the virtue and happiness of the people may be preserved, and that the government which they have instituted for the protection of their liberties, may be perpetual."

The Senate in their reply approved the sentiments of the address, and, noticing the prosperity of the United States, they added,

"Whilst contemplating the causes that produced this auspicious result, we must acknowledge the excellence of the constitutional system, and the wisdom of the legislative provisions ; but we should be deficient

in gratitude and justice, did we not attribute a great portion of these advantages to the virtue, firmness, and talents of your administration ; which have been conspicuously displayed, in the most trying times, and on the most critical occasions ; it is therefore with the sincerest regret, that we now receive an official notification of your intentions to retire from the publick employments of your country.

“ When we review the various scenes of your publick life, so long and so successfully devoted to the most arduous services, civil and military ; as well during the struggles of the American Revolution, as the convulsive periods of a recent date, we cannot look forward to your retirement without our warmest affections and most anxious regards accompanying you ; and without mingling with our fellow citizens at large, in the sincerest wishes for your personal happiness, that sensibility and attachment can express.

“ The most effectual consolation that can offer for the loss we are about to sustain, arises from the animating reflection that the influence of your example will extend to your successors, and the United States thus continue to enjoy an able, upright, and energetick Administration.”

In the House of Representatives, an answer, which promised attention to the several subjects recommended in the Speech, and concluded as follows, was after pointed objection and warm debate, voted by a large majority.

“ And while we entertain a grateful conviction that your wise, firm, and patriotick administration has been signally conducive to the success of the present form of government, we cannot forbear to express the deep sensations of regret with which we contemplate your intended retirement from office.

“ As no other suitable occasion may occur, we cannot suffer the present to pass without attempting to

disclose some of the emotions which it cannot fail to awaken.

“ The gratitude and admiration of your countrymen are still drawn to the recollection of those resplendent virtues and talents which were so eminently instrumental to the achievement of the Revolution, and of which that glorious event will ever be the memorial. Your obedience to the voice of duty and your country, when you quitted reluctantly, a second time, the retreat you had chosen, and first accepted the Presidency, afforded a new proof of the devotedness of your zeal in its service, and an earnest of the patriotism and success which have characterized your Administration. As the grateful confidence of the citizens in the virtues of their Chief Magistrate has essentially contributed to that success, we persuade ourselves that the millions whom we represent, participate with us in the anxious solicitude of the present occasion.

“ Yet we cannot be unmindful that your moderation and magnanimity, twice displayed by retiring from your exalted stations, afford examples no less rare and instructive to mankind than valuable to a Republic.

“ Although we are sensible that this event, of itself, completes the lustre of a character already conspicuously unrivalled by the coincidence of virtue, talents, success, and publick estimation ; yet we conceive we owe it to you, sir, and still more emphatically to ourselves and to our nation, (of the language of whose hearts we presume to think ourselves, at this moment, the faithful interpreters) to express the sentiments with which it is contemplated.

“ The spectacle of a free and enlightened nation, offering by its Representatives the tribute of unfeigned approbation to its first citizen, however novel and interesting it may be, derives all its lustre (a lustre which accident or enthusiasm could not bestow, and

which adulation would tarnish) from the transcendent merit, of which it is the voluntary testimony.

“ May you long enjoy that liberty which is so dear to you; and to which your name will ever be so dear. May your own virtue and a nation's prayers obtain the happiest sunshine for the decline of your days, and the choicest of future blessings. For our country's sake, and for the sake of republican liberty, it is our earnest wish that your example may be the guide of your successors; and thus, after being the ornament and safeguard of the present age, become the patrimony of our descendants.”

President WASHINGTON now with supreme delight anticipated the time when he should quit the storms and agitations of publick life, for the retirement of Mount Vernon; and on the day, which terminated his Presidential course, he directed the following letter to the Secretary of State.

“ DEAR SIR,

“ At the conclusion of my publick employments I have thought it expedient to notice the publication of certain forged letters which first appeared in the year 1776, and were obtruded upon the publick as mine. They are said by the editor to have been found in a small portmanteau that I had left in the care of my mulatto servant named Billy, who it is pretended was taken prisoner at Fort Lee, in 1776. The period when these letters were first printed will be recollected, and what were the impressions they were intended to produce on the publick mind. It was then supposed to be of some consequence to strike at the integrity of the motives of the American Commander in Chief, and to paint his inclinations as at variance with his professions and his duty—another crisis in the affairs of America having occurred, the same weapon has been resorted to, to wound my character and deceive the people.

To the President he thus replied.

"At the epoch of my retirement, an invasion of these states by any European power, or even the probability of such an event in my days, was so far from being contemplated by me, that I had no conception either that or any other occurrence would arise, in so short a period, which could turn my eyes from the shades of Mount Vernon. But this seems to be the age of wonders. And it is reserved for intoxicated and lawless France (for purposes of providence far beyond the reach of human ken) to slaughter her own citizens, and to disturb the repose of all the world besides. From a view of the past, from the prospect of the present, and of that which seems to be expected, it is not easy for me to decide satisfactorily on the part it might best become me to act. In case of actual invasion by a formidable force, I certainly should not entrench myself under the cover of age and retirement, if my services should be required by my country to assist in repelling it. And if there be good cause to expect such an event, which certainly must be better known to the government than to private citizens, delay in preparing for it may be dangerous, improper, and not to be justified by prudence. The uncertainty however of the latter, in my mind, creates my embarrassment; for I cannot bring it to believe, regardless as the French are of treaties, and of the laws of nations, and capable as I conceive them to be of any species of despotism and injustice, that they will attempt to invade this country after such an uniform and unequivocal expression of the determination of the people in all parts to oppose them with their lives and fortunes. That they have been led to believe by their agents and partisans among us that we are a divided people, that the latter are opposed to their own government, and that the show of a small force would occasion a revolt, I have no doubt; and how far these men (grown desperate) will further at-

tempt to deceive, and may succeed in keeping up the deception is problematical. Without that, the folly of the Directory in such an attempt would, I conceive, be more conspicuous, if possible, than their wickedness.

“ Having with candour made this disclosure of the state of my mind, it remains only for me to add, that to those who know me best, it is best known, that should imperious circumstances induce me to exchange once more the smooth paths of retirement for the thorny ways of publick life, at a period too when repose is more congenial to nature, that it would be productive of sensations which can be more easily conceived than expressed.”

To the question of the Secretary of War, this was his answer.

“ It cannot be necessary for me to premise to you or to others who know my sentiments, that to quit the tranquillity of retirement, and enter the boundless field of responsibility, would be productive of sensations which a better pen than I possess would find it difficult to describe. Nevertheless the principle by which my conduct has been actuated through life, would not suffer me, in any great emergency, to withhold any services I could render when required by my country ; especially in a case where its dearest rights are assailed by lawless ambition and intoxicated power, in contempt of every principle of justice, and in violation of solemn compacts, and of laws which govern all civilized nations ; and this too with the obvious intent to sow thick the seeds of disunion, for the purpose of subjugating our government, and destroying our independence and happiness.

“ Under circumstances like these, accompanied by an actual invasion of our territory, it would be difficult for me at any time to remain an idle spectator under the plea of age or retirement. With sorrow, it is true, I should quit the shades of my peaceful abode, and the ease and happiness I now enjoy, to encounter anew

the turmoils of war, to which, possibly, my strength and powers might be found incompetent. These, however, should not be stumbling blocks in my own way. But there are other things highly important for me to ascertain and settle, before I could give a definitive answer to your question.

"First, the propriety in the opinion of the publick, so far as that opinion has been expressed in conversation, of my appearing again on the publick theatre, after declaring the sentiments I did in my valedictory address of September, 1796.

"2dly. A conviction in my own breast, from the best information that can be obtained, that it is the wish of my country that its military force should be committed to my charge ; and

3dly. That the army now to be formed should be so appointed as to afford a well grounded hope of its doing honour to the country, and credit to him who commands it in the field."

Before these letters had reached the seat of government, the President had nominated to the Senate, "General WASHINGTON to be Lieutenant General and Commander in Chief of the Armies raised and to be raised." The Secretary of War waited upon him with his commission, and with the following letter from the President.

"Mr. M'Henry, the Secretary of War, will have the honour to wait on you in my behalf, to impart to you a step I have ventured to take, which I should have been happy to have communicated in person, had such a journey at this time been in my power.

"My reasons for this measure will be too well known to need any explanation to the publick. Every friend and every enemy of America will comprehend them at first blush. To you, sir, I owe all the apology I can make. The urgent necessity I am in of your advice and assistance, indeed of your conduct and direction of the war, is all I can urge ; and that is a suf-

sufficient justification to myself and to the world. I hope it will be so considered by yourself. Mr. M^r Henry will have the honour to consult you upon the organization of the army, and upon every thing relating to it."

With the order to wait on General WASHINGTON, the Secretary of War received from President Adams the following instructions.

"It is my desire that you embrace the first opportunity to set out on your journey to Mount Vernon, and wait on General WASHINGTON with the commission of Lieutenant General and Commander in Chief of the armies of the United States, which, by the advice and consent of the Senate, has been signed by me.

"The reasons and motives which prevailed on me to venture on such a step as the nomination of this great and illustrious character, whose voluntary resignation alone occasioned my introduction to the office I now hold, were too numerous to be detailed in this letter, and are too obvious and important to escape the observation of any part of America or Europe. But as it is a movement of great delicacy, it will require all your address to communicate the subject in a manner that shall be inoffensive to his feelings, and consistent with all the respect that is due from me to him.

"If the General should decline the appointment, all the world will be silent, and respectfully acquiesce. If he should accept it, all the world, except the enemies of this country, will rejoice. If he should come to no decisive determination, but take the subject into consideration, I shall not appoint any other Lieutenant General until his conclusion is known."

The General opened himself explicitly to the Secretary of War, and by him returned the following answer to the President's communication.

"I had the honour, on the evening of the 11th instant, to receive from the hands of the Secretary of War your favour of the 7th, announcing that you had, with the advice and consent of the Senate, appointed

the Lieutenant General and Commander in Chief of the Armies raised, or to be raised for the service of the United States.

"I cannot express how greatly affected I am at this new proof of publick confidence, and at the highly flattering manner in which you have been pleased to make the communication. At the same time, I must not conceal from you my earnest wish that the choice had fallen upon a man less declined in years, and better qualified to encounter the usual vicissitudes of war.

"You know, sir, what calculations I had made relative to the probable course of events on my retiring from office, and the determination, with which I had consoled myself, of closing the remnant of my days in my present peaceful abode. You will therefore be at no loss to conceive and appreciate the sensations I must have experienced, to bring my mind to any conclusion that would pledge me at so late a period of life, to leave scenes I sincerely love, to enter upon the boundless field of publick action, incessant trouble, and high responsibility.

"It was not possible for me to remain ignorant of, or indifferent to recent transactions. The conduct of the Directory of France towards our country; their insidious hostility to its government; their various practices to withdraw the affections of the people from it; the evident tendency of their arts, and those of their agents, to countenance and invigorate opposition; their disregard of solemn treaties and the laws of nations; their war upon our defenceless commerce; their treatment of our Ministers of peace; and their demands, amounting to tribute, could not fail to excite in me, sentiments corresponding with those my countrymen have so generally expressed in their affectionate addresses to you.

"Believe me, sir, no man can more cordially approve the wise and prudent measures of your Administration. They ought to inspire universal confidence,

and will, no doubt, combined with the state of things, call from Congress such laws and means as will enable you to meet the full force and extent of the crisis.

“ Satisfied, therefore, that you have sincerely wished and endeavoured to avert war, and exhausted to the last drop the cup of reconciliation, we can, with pure hearts, appeal to heaven for the justice of our cause, and may confidently trust the final result, to that kind Providence who has heretofore, and so often, signally favoured the people of the United States.

“ Thinking in this manner, and feeling how incumbent it is upon every person of every description to contribute, at all times, to his country's welfare, and especially in a moment like the present, when every thing we hold dear and sacred is so seriously threatened, I have finally determined to accept the commission of Commander in Chief of the Armies of the United States, with the reserve only, that I shall not be called into the field until the army is in a situation to require my presence, or it becomes indispensable by the urgency of circumstances.

“ In making this reservation, I beg it to be understood that I do not mean to withhold any assistance to arrange and organize the army, which you may think I can afford. I take the liberty also to mention that I must decline having my acceptance considered as drawing after it any immediate charge upon the publick, or that I can receive any emoluments annexed to the appointment before I am in a situation to incur expense.”

From this period the domestick employments of General WASHINGTON were blended with the concerns of his publick commission ; but he did not apprehend that France would push her aggressions to actual war. He conceived that the object of the Directory was to subject the Government of the United States to their measures, either through fear of war, or by the controlling influence of the people.

It was the settled opinion of the General, that the great body of the American people were actuated by the love of country, and only needed information respecting the measures of government to induce them to support it. In the patriotick spirit, excited in 1798, he contemplated a resource, which might at all times be relied upon to repel foreign aggressions, and on this occasion he confidently expected that France would recede from her insolent pretensions.

But he did not live to see the fulfilment of his predictions. On Friday, December 13, 1799, while superintending some improvements on his estate, he was out in a light rain, which wet his neck and hair. The occurrence commanded no immediate attention, but in the course of the ensuing night he was seized with an inflammation of the wind pipe. The complaint was accompanied with difficulty in swallowing, and with a quick and laborious respiration.

Conceiving that bleeding would be salutary, a vein was opened by one accustomed to the use of the lancet, and fourteen ounces of blood taken from him ; but he could not be persuaded to send for his physician until the morning. About 11 o'clock, on Saturday, Dr. Craik arrived, and perceiving his extreme danger, desired the advice of two consulting physicians ; but their aid, in this case, was unavailing. Speaking soon became painful, and respiration contracted and imperfect, and at half past eleven on Saturday night, December 14, in the full possession of reason, he expired.

From the moment of attack, he believed the disease would prove mortal, and submitted to medical aid rather to gratify the wishes of his anxious friends, than from any expectation of relief. Some hours before death, with extreme difficulty, he intelligibly expressed a desire that he might be permitted to die without further disturbance. When he could no longer swallow, he undressed himself and got into bed, there to await his dissolution. Dr. Craik took the head of his

beloved and respected friend in his lap, to whom the General said, "Doctor, I am dying, and have been dying for a long time, but I am not afraid to die." With fortitude he bore the painful conflict, and with perfect serenity resigned himself to his God.

His interment on Wednesday, the 18th of December, was attended by religious services, and military honours; and a great concourse of people followed his hearse, as undissembled mourners.

The report of the death of General WASHINGTON reached the seat of Government before the information of his sickness. It excited the highest sensibility in the members of Congress, and overwhelmed them with affliction. A solemn silence prevailed in the House of Representatives for several minutes. At length Mr. Marshall, the present Chief Justice of the United States, mentioned the melancholy information. "This information is not certain," he observed, "but there is too much reason to believe it true. After receiving intelligence," he added, "of a national calamity so heavy and afflicting, the House of Representatives can be but ill fitted for publick business." In consequence, both Houses adjourned.

On opening the House the next morning, Mr. Marshall addressed the Chair in the following manner.

"The melancholy event which was yesterday announced with doubt, has been rendered but too certain. Our WASHINGTON is no more! The Hero, the Patriot, and the Sage of America—the man on whom, in times of danger, every eye was turned, and all hopes were placed, lives now only in his own great actions, and in the hearts of an affectionate and afflicted people.

"If, sir, it had even not been usual openly to testify respect for the memory of those whom Heaven has selected as its instruments for dispensing good to man, yet, such has been the uncommon worth, and such the extraordinary incidents which have marked the life of him whose loss we all deplore, that the whole Ameri-

can nation, impelled by the same feelings, would call, with one voice, for a publick manifestation of that sorrow which is so deep and so universal.

“More than any other individual, and as much as to one individual was possible, has he contributed to found this our wide spreading empire, and to give to the Western World, independence and freedom.

“Having effected the great object for which he was placed at the head of our armies, we have seen him convert the sword into the ploughshare, and sink the soldier into the citizen.

“When the debility of our Federal System had become manifest, and the bonds which connected this vast Continent were dissolving, we have seen him, the Chief of those Patriots who formed for us a Constitution, which, by preserving the Union, will, I trust, substantiate and perpetuate those blessings which our Revolution had promised to bestow.

“In obedience to the general voice of his country, calling him to preside over a great people, we have seen him once more quit the retirement he loved, and in a season more stormy and tempestuous than war itself, with calm and wise determination, pursue the true interests of the nation, and contribute, more than any other could contribute, to the establishment of that system of policy, which will, I trust, yet preserve our peace, our honour, and independence.

“Having twice been unanimously chosen the Chief Magistrate of a free people, we have seen him, at a time when his re-election with universal suffrage could not be doubted, afford to the world a rare instance of moderation, by withdrawing from his high station to the peaceful walks of private life.

“However the publick confidence may change, and the publick affections fluctuate with respect to others, with respect to him, they have, in war and in peace, in publick and in private life, been as steady as his own firm mind, and as constant as his own exalted virtues.

"Let us then, Mr. Speaker, pay the last tribute of respect and affection to our departed friend. Let the Grand Council of the nation display those sentiments which the nation feels. For this purpose I hold in my hand some resolutions which I take the liberty of offering to the House."

The resolutions, after stating the death of General WASHINGTON, were as follows.

"Resolved, That this House will wait on the President in condolence of this mournful event.

"Resolved, That the Speaker's chair be shrouded with black, and that the members and officers of the House wear black during the session.

"Resolved, That a Committee in conjunction with one from the Senate, be appointed to consider on the most suitable manner of paying honour to the memory of the man, first in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his fellow citizens."

These resolutions had no sooner passed, than a written message was received from the President, transmitting a letter from Mr. Lear, "which," said the message, "will inform you that it had pleased Divine Providence to remove from this life our excellent fellow citizen, GEORGE WASHINGTON, by the purity of his life, and a long series of services to his country, rendered illustrious through the world. It remains for an affectionate and grateful people, in whose hearts he can never die, to pay suitable honour to his memory."

On this mournful event, the Senate addressed to the President the following letter.

"The Senate of the United States respectfully take leave, sir, to express to you their deep regret for the loss their country sustains in the death of General GEORGE WASHINGTON.

"This event, so distressing to all our fellow citizens, must be peculiarly heavy to you, who have long been associated with him in *deeds of patriotism*. Permit us, sir, to mingle our tears with yours. On this occa-

sion it is manly to weep. To lose such a man, at such a crisis, is no common calamity to the world. Our country mourns a Father. The Almighty Disposer of human events has taken from us our greatest benefactor and ornament. It becomes us to submit with reverence to HIM who "maketh darkness his pavilion."

"With patriotick pride we review the life of our WASHINGTON, and compare him with those of other countries who have been pre-eminent in fame. Ancient and modern names are diminished before him. Greatness and guilt have too often been allied; but his fame is whiter than it is brilliant. The destroyers of nations stood abashed at the majesty of his virtues. It reprov'd the intemperance of their ambition, and darkened the splendour of victory. The scene is closed, and we are no longer anxious lest misfortune should sully his glory; he has travelled on to the end of his journey, and carried with him an increasing weight of honour; he has deposited it safely where misfortune cannot tarnish it; where malice cannot blast it. Favoured of heaven, he departed without exhibiting the weakness of humanity; magnanimous in death, the darkness of the grave could not obscure his brightness.

"Such was the man whom we deplore. Thanks to God, his glory is consummated. WASHINGTON yet lives on Earth in his spotless example—His spirit is in Heaven.

"Let his countrymen consecrate the memory of the heroick General, the patriotick Statesman, and the virtuous Sage. Let them teach their children never to forget that the fruits of his labours and his example are their inheritance."

To which the President made the following answer.

"I receive, with the most respectful and affectionate sentiments, in this impressive address, the obliging expressions of your regret for the loss our country has sustained, in the death of her most esteemed, beloved, and admired citizen.

"In the multitude of my thoughts and recollections on this melancholy event, you will permit me to say, that I have seen him in the days of adversity, in some of the scenes of his deepest distress, and most trying perplexities. I have also attended him in his highest elevation, and most prosperous felicity, with uniform admiration of his wisdom, moderation, and constancy.

"Among all our original associates in that memorable *league of this Continent* in 1774, which first expressed the sovereign will of a free nation in America, he was the only one remaining in the general government. Although with a constitution more enfeebled than his, at an age when he thought it necessary to prepare for retirement, I feel myself alone, bereaved of my last brother; yet I derive a strong consolation from the unanimous disposition which appears in all ages and classes to mingle their sorrows with mine on this common calamity to the world.

"The life of our WASHINGTON cannot suffer by a comparison with those of other countries, who have been most celebrated and exalted by fame. The attributes and decorations of *royalty* could only have served to eclipse the majesty of those virtues which made him from being a modest *citizen*, a more resplendent luminary. Misfortune, had he lived, could hereafter have sullied his glory only with those superficial minds, who, believing that characters and actions are marked by success alone, rarely deserve to enjoy it. *Malice* could never blast his honour, and *envy* made him a singular exception to her universal rule. For himself, he had lived long enough to life and to glory. For his fellow citizens, if their prayers could have been answered, he would have been immortal; for me, his departure is at a most unfortunate moment. Trusting, however, in the wise and righteous dominion of Providence over the passions of men, and the results

of their councils and actions, as well as over their lives, nothing remains for me but *humble resignation*.

"His example is now complete; and it will teach wisdom and virtue to magistrates, citizens, and men, not only in the present age, but in future generations, as long as our history shall be read. If a Trajan found a Pliny, a Marcus Aurelius can never want biographers, eulogists, or historians."

A joint committee of the two Houses reported the following resolutions.

"That a marble monument be erected by the United States at the city of Washington, and that the family of General WASHINGTON be requested to permit his body to be deposited under it; and that the monument be so designed as to commemorate the great events of his military and political life.

"That there be a funeral procession from Congress Hall to the German Lutheran Church, in memory of General WASHINGTON, on Thursday the 26th instant, and that an oration be prepared at the request of Congress, to be delivered before both Houses on that day; and that the President of the Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives, be desired to request one of the members of Congress to prepare and deliver the same.

"That it be recommended to the people of the United States to wear crape on the left arm as mourning for thirty days.

"That the President of the United States be requested to direct a copy of these resolutions to be transmitted to Mrs. Washington, assuring her of the profound respect Congress will ever bear to her person and character, of their condolence on the late affecting dispensation of Providence, and entreating her assent to the interment of the remains of General WASHINGTON in the manner expressed in the first resolution.

"That the President be requested to issue his Proclamation, notifying to the people throughout the United States the recommendation contained in the third resolution."

The President transmitted the resolutions of Congress to Mrs. Washington, to which she thus replied.

"Taught by the great example which I have so long had before me, never to oppose my private wishes to the publick will, I must consent to the request made by Congress, which you have had the goodness to transmit to me ; and in doing this, I need not, I cannot say, what a sacrifice of individual feeling I make to a sense of duty."

Information of the death of General WASHINGTON was, throughout the United States, accompanied by spontaneous and universal expressions of deep grief for his loss, and of the highest veneration for his memory. The citizens without exception complied with the recommendations of Congress. Civil Incorporations and Legislative Bodies, Colleges and all other respectable Societies, formed funeral processions, and attended upon prayers, eulogies, and orations.

The resolution of Congress respecting the monument has not been carried into execution. When a motion for the necessary appropriation was made in the House of Representatives, many members manifested a preference for an Equestrian Statue, voted by Congress at the close of the war, and in the dispute between a monument and a statue, the session of the Legislature passed away, and no appropriation was made.

They, who had opposed every part of his administration, probably could not in sincerity favour a National Monument to his memory ; and when the subject was revived in Congress, the publick feelings, having in some measure subsided, they opposed any appropriation for this purpose, as an improper use of publick money. The reason assigned for objecting to

the measure was, that the gratitude and veneration of the people were the appropriate monument of the public services of the American Patriot.

General WASHINGTON never had any children. By his will he left Mrs. Washington the use of all his property during her life. At her decease he liberated his slaves, and disposed of property among his and her relations, amounting by his own estimate, to five hundred and thirty thousand dollars. This amount of property does not include the Mansion House on Mount Vernon, nor the domain connected with it, which was under the personal management of General WASHINGTON.



CONCLUSION.

GENERAL WASHINGTON was exactly six feet in height, he appeared taller, as his shoulders rose a little higher than the true proportion. His eyes were of a gray, and his hair of a brown colour. His limbs were well formed, and indicated strength. His complexion was light, and his countenance serene and thoughtful.

His manners were graceful, manly, and dignified. His general appearance never failed to engage the respect and esteem of all who approached him.

Possessing strong natural passions, and having the nicest feelings of honour, he was in early life prone keenly to resent practices which carried the intention of abuse or insult; but the reflections of maturer age gave him the most perfect government of himself. He possessed a faculty above all other men to hide the weaknesses inseparable from human nature; and he bore with meekness and equanimity his distinguished honours.

Reserved, but not haughty, in his disposition, he was accessible to all in concerns of business, but he

opened himself only to his confidential friends; and no art or address could draw from him an opinion, which he thought prudent to conceal.

He was not so much distinguished for brilliancy of genius as for solidity of judgment, and consummate prudence of conduct. He was not so eminent for any one quality of greatness and worth, as for the union of those great, amiable, and good qualities, which are very rarely combined in the same character.

His maxims were formed upon the result of mature reflection, or extensive experience; they were the invariable rules of his practice; and on all important instances, he seemed to have an intuitive view of what the occasion rendered fit and proper. He pursued his purposes with a resolution, which, one solitary moment excepted, never failed him.*

Alive to social pleasures, he delighted to enter into familiar conversation with his acquaintance, and was sometimes sportive in his letters to his friends; but he never lost sight of the dignity of his character, nor deviated from the decorous and appropriate behaviour becoming his station in society.

He commanded from all the most respectful attention, and no man in his company ever fell into light or lewd conversation. His style of living corresponded with his wealth; but his extensive establishment was managed with the strictest economy, and he ever reserved ample funds liberally to promote schemes of private benevolence, and works of public utility. Punctual himself to every engagement, he exacted from others a strict fulfilment of contracts, but to the necessitous he was diffusive in his charities, and he greatly assisted the poorer classes of people in his vicinity, by furnishing them with means successfully to prosecute plans of industry.

In domestick and private life, he blended the autho-

* On York Island, in 1776.—See Vol. I. page 87.

city of the master with the care and kindness of the guardian and friend. Solicitous for the welfare of his slaves, while at mount Vernon, he every morning rode round his estates to examine their condition ; for the sick, physicians were provided, and to the weak and infirm every necessary comfort was administered. The servitude of the negroes lay with weight upon his mind ; he often made it the subject of conversation, and resolved several plans for their general emancipation ; but could devise none, which promised success, in consistency with humanity to them, and safety to the state.

The address presented to him at Alexandria, on the commencement of his presidency, fully shows how much he was endeared to his neighbours, and the affection and esteem, in which his friends held his private character.

His industry was unremitted, and his method so exact, that all the complicated business of his military command, and civil administration, was managed without confusion, and without hurry.

Not feeling the lust of power, and ambitious only for honourable fame, he devoted himself to his country upon the most disinterested principles ; and his actions wore not the semblance but the reality of virtue : the purity of his motives was accredited, and absolute confidence placed in his patriotism.

While filling a public station, the performance of his duty took the place of pleasure, emolument, and every private consideration. During the more critical years of the war, a smile was scarcely seen upon his countenance, he gave himself no moments of relaxation ; but his whole mind was engrossed to execute successfully his trust.

As a military commander, he struggled with innumerable embarrassments, arising from the short enlistment of his men, and from the want of provisions,

clothing, arms, and ammunition; and an opinion of his achievements should be formed in view of these inadequate means.

The first years of his civil administration were attended with the extraordinary fact, that while a great proportion of his countrymen did not approve his measures, they universally venerated his character, and relied implicitly on his integrity. Although his opponents eventually deemed it expedient to vilify his character, that they might diminish his political influence; yet the moment that he retired from public life, they returned to their expressions of veneration and esteem; and after his death, used every endeavour to secure to their party the influence of his name.

He was as eminent for piety as for patriotism. His public and private conduct evince, that he impressively felt a sense of the superintendence of God and of the dependence of man. In his addresses, while at the head of the army, and of the national government, he gratefully noticed the signal blessings of Providence, and fervently commended his country to divine benediction. In private, he was known to have been habitually devout.

In principle and practice he was a *Christian*. The support of an Episcopal church, in the vicinity of Mount Vernon, rested principally upon him, and here, when on his estate, he with constancy attended public worship. In his address to the American people, at the close of the war, mentioning the favourable period of the world at which the independence of his country was established, and enumerating the causes which unitedly had ameliorated the condition of human society, he, above science, philosophy, commerce, and all other considerations, ranked "*the pure and benign light of Revelation*." Supplicating Heaven that his fellow citizens might cultivate the disposition, and practise the virtues, which exalt a community, he presented the following petition to his God, "That he

would most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility and pacifick temper of mind, which were the characteristicks of the *Divine Author of our blessed religion*; without a humble imitation of whose example in these things, we can never hope to be a happy nation."

During the war, he not unfrequently rode ten or twelve miles from camp to attend publick worship; and he never omitted this attendance, when opportunity presented.

In the establishment of his presidential household, he reserved to himself the Sabbath, free from the interruptions of private visits, or publick business; and throughout the eight years of his civil administration, he gave to the institutions of christianity the influence of his example.

He was as fortunate as great and good.

Under his auspices, a civil war was conducted with mildness, and a revolution with order. Raised himself above the influence of popular passions, he happily directed these passions to the most useful purposes. Uniting the talents of the soldier with the qualifications of the statesman, and pursuing, unmoved by difficulties, the noblest end by the purest means, he had the supreme satisfaction of beholding the complete success of his great military and civil services, in the independence and happiness of his country.

END OF VOLUME II.







**This book is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building**

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